

Desolate Era

(莽荒纪)

Book 39

Nuwa

I Eat Tomatoes

(我吃西红柿)

Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller... than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1: A Daolord Who Failed the Daomerge

Vastheaven Palace. The Darknorth Estate.

Emperor Solesky, Su Youji, Hegemon Azurefiend, and the Flamewing God were all staring at the sealed gates to Ji Ning's estate.

Rumble... the gates to the estate swung open, followed by a white-robed youth with a black sheath on his back emerging from within.

Everything seemed so ordinary, as though nothing at all had happened... but Solesky, Azurefiend, and the others all sighed silently. All powerful experts were able to sense the tiny ripples generated by a decaying truesoul. Even though the ripples were incredibly minute, they were constant and continuous. Even though Ning's truesoul was unfathomably more powerful than an ordinary mortal's, given enough time it would still be extinguished.

"Master." Flamewing raised its giant head to stare at Ning rather desperately.

"Darknorth." Solesky and Azurefiend wanted to say something, but both hesitated. Su Youji's eyes were completely red, and she was using her Immortal energy to evaporate her tears as soon as they appeared.

"Look at all of you." Ning laughed. "Everyone who has chosen the path of cultivation knows how difficult a path this is. The Daomerge for an Omega Dao is the most difficult of all! I've failed my Daomerge, but I was mentally prepared for that long ago. It is no big deal."

"Good." Azurefiend's eyes lit up and he called out, "Darknorth, you have only trained for a fairly brief period of time, but I must confess that my Dao-heart is inferior to yours. If I had failed my Daomerge, I wouldn't have been able to endure it. Given my temperament, I probably would've gone crazy. Even if I managed to eventually calm down, it would've only happened after I vented for an extremely long period of time. I can't promise anything else, but I'll definitely continue to serve you. So long as

you are alive, I will follow you and be by your side. I'll also carry out to the absolute best of my ability any tasks you wish me to do in the future."

"Thank you." Ning smiled. Some people who were forced to become retainers would feel resentment, but Ning and Azurefiend had known each other for so long that Azurefiend knew what type of person Ning was. Ning was an open, straightforward man who was benevolent to his friends and terrible to his foes. Azurefiend enjoyed his relationship with Ning, and he couldn't help but feel heartache upon seeing Ning fail the Daomerge. He couldn't help but sigh at how such a peerless Daolord was about to vanish from this universe.

"Darknorth, your students and fellow disciples are all waiting outside. Shall you...?" Solesky spoke out.

"Don't worry about them. This can be considered a lesson to them as to how cruel and brutal the Daomerge is," Ning said with a laugh. "Come, come! All of you, sit and drink with me. We'll have guests arriving soon."

"Guests?" Azurefiend and Solesky were briefly startled, but then they immediately understood. The Lonely King and Realmlord Windgrace had been biding their time. Now that Ning had failed the Daomerge, they would probably make their move.

"We'll drink over here while awaiting our guests." Ning turned to stare towards the outside, where a number of figures were flying over to Vastheaven Palace. He smiled. "Brother Brightshore, since you've arrived, share some wine with us."

Whoosh. The protective barriers around Vastheaven Palace split apart, allowing Hegemon Brightshore, Hegemon Windrain, Hegemon Netherlily, Daoist Bluestone, Emperor Goldisle, Emperor Blackcloud, and some other Hegemons and Emperors who were on good terms with Ning to fly inside. Everyone knew each other and could be considered friends. Now that Ning had failed the Daomerge, all of them felt great regret and wished to meet with him.

When they saw how the white-robed youth greeted them all with a smile, the Hegemons and Emperors couldn't help but secretly sigh once

more. How many of them would be able to so quickly regain their calm after failing the Daomerge and suffering the most grievous blow a cultivator could possibly suffer? No wonder Daolord Darknorth had reached such impressive heights.

A pity. Such a pity.

His path was that of the Omega Dao. If he had chosen a simpler path, such as fusing multiple Supreme Daos, he probably would've already become a Hegemon.

"Let's not chit-chat too much today. Drink up!" Ning said.

Hegemon Brightshore and the others all understood. An expert like Ning didn't need the pity of others. "Alright, let's just eat and drink!"

"Darknorth, don't blame me if I end up cleaning your entire stock of wine!"

"Drink as much as you like. Our guests will probably interrupt us soon and prevent us from drinking," Ning teased.

"Guests?" Hegemon Brightshore and the others all quivered. They knew that Ning was referring to Lonely King and Realmlord Windgrace. They couldn't help but sigh. The only ones present who could truly maintain their uncaring calm were Flamewing and Ning himself.

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The Hegemons, Emperors, Su Youji, Pillsaint, and Flamewing all casually sat down alongside each other. Some sat down on the grass, some sat down on the stone bridge, some sat down within the pavilion. Everyone had a wine-laden table before them, and the estate was filled with the sound of jesting and laughing.

Just a short while later, a rumbling sound could be heard. Ning raised his head fractionally, glancing off into the distance. His gaze pierced through the void and allowed him to see a streak of azure light that had just reached the Vastheaven Everworld and making its way over here. This streak of azure light was the bearded, disheveled old 'Realmlord Windgrace'.

No one aside from Ning noticed the Realmslord's arrival.

"The Blacksun truly is remarkable. The Hiddenfiend Realmverse and the Flamedragon Realmverse are quite far away, but he was able to arrive in an instant." Ning couldn't help but sigh. "The Sithe truly are remarkable."

Realmslord Windgrace walked through the air within the Vastheaven Everworld, quickly arriving outside Vastheaven Palace. "My young friend Darknorth." His voice suddenly rang out from outside.

"Realmslord Windgrace has arrived. Come and share a few cups of wine with us," Ning said. The barriers parted before the Realmslord, giving him a passageway inside. Realmslord Windgrace walked through the skies, following the passageway into Vastheaven Palace.

The Hegemons and Emperors within the Darknorth Estate all rose to their feet. Even the irascible Hegemon Azurefiend rose. The only ones to remain seated were Ning and Flamewing. "Greetings, Realmslord Windgrace," everyone said respectfully.

When Realmslord Windgrace saw that Ning remained seated, he felt quite intrigued. His face, however, remained completely unruffled.

"Realmslord Windgrace. Please have a seat." Ning pointed at a table located atop a patch of grass.

"This wine certainly smells nice." Realmslord Windgrace walked over to the table, then sat down in the lotus position. He picked up the gourd of wine and began to guzzle it down. "Delicious, delicious! Darknorth, my young friend, I hurried here as soon as I heard that you failed the Daomerge. Alas... the Daomerge for an Omega Dao must have been incredibly difficult. The Autarchs once told me that no one has ever been able to succeed in the Daomerge with an Omega Dao."

The entire area quickly fell silent. The many Hegemons and Emperors no longer dared to say a word. Su Youji and Pillsaint both sensed how oppressive and gloomy the atmosphere had become! For Realmslord Windgrace to immediately raise the topic of Ning failing the Daomerge meant that he had clearly come on business.

“I imagine you already know why I have come here, my young friend Darknorth.” Realmslord Windgrace looked at Ning. “It would be very difficult to convince the Flamewing God to willingly serve me... but if you, his master, agreed to help out then things would be much simpler. I won’t force you to agree; in the end, it will be your own choice. If there’s something you desire from me, you merely need to let me know what you want! I, Windgrace, will definitely do everything within my power to accomplish it. In fact, I can even swear a lifeblood oath on it.”

“Even if you do agree, I won’t take the Flamewing God away immediately. I’ll wait until you die and your Dao vanishes before doing so.” Realmslord Windgrace looked at Ning.

“GWAAAAAAR!” Ning was quite calm, but the happily-eating Flamewing was enraged upon hearing this. It let out a vicious roar as it transformed into its true form of a winged, flame-bathed bear, then moved to charge straight towards Realmslord Windgrace.

“Be good, Flamewing.” Ning’s voice caused Flamewing to come to a sudden halt. It turned to look rather unhappily at Ning. “Maaaaster!”

“Be good. Just keep eating. Don’t worry about this stuff,” Ning said.

“Oh.” Flamewing once more transformed into human form, then sat down and began to eat. Just two mouthfuls in, he once more turned his head to stare at Ning. “Master, the only one I’ll follow is you. I don’t like any of the others.”

“WINDGRACE!!!” A cold, clear voice filled with frigid might suddenly rang out, shaking the skies above Vastheaven Palace.

Ji Ning, Realmslord Windgrace, and the others all turned to look. They saw an enormous rift in spacetime appear in the skies above, with an entire host of figures flying out of it. There were more than fifty of the titanic onyx humanoids, and they were lined up in orderly rows. At their head was a pair of golden humanoids, who stood to each side of a giant, levitating silver throne.

A silver-robed golden humanoid was seated atop the silver throne. He stared downwards at the distant Vastheaven Palace with a cold look in his

eyes, and the blood-colored diamond in the middle of his forehead glared like an icy third eye.

Lord Wulf led his four Black Emperors to immediately reunite with the others. Lord Wulf couldn't help but let out a sigh of relief. Thankfully, his Majesty had arrived quite quickly. If he had been just a few minutes slower, things would've become troublesome.

"You came quite fast." Realmslord Windgrace's voice echoed within the skies above the palace. "And you brought the entire Icepeak Army! It seems you must've been waiting outside the Flamedragon Realmverse for quite some time now. But... 'Lonely', you should probably know that the soldiers of the Icepeak Army would be throwing their lives away if they got involved in this. You should have them hide and avoid getting involved in this."

"And who would take their lives? You?" The Lonely King stared down at him from atop his throne.

The Hegemons and Emperors inside Vastheaven Palace, the disciples of Vastheaven Palace, the Eternal Emperors who were watching from within the Vastheaven Everworld... all of them were completely stunned. Nobody dared to make a move.

Chapter 2: Struggle

“T-that many legendary Black Emperors?!” The Eternal Emperors who had simply been drawn over by the aura Ji Ning had emanated during the Daomerge were utterly terrified out of their wits when they saw the Icepeak Army appear. Even the basic soldiers were all at the Hegemonic level of power, capable of wiping out the ordinary Emperors with ease... and the three generals had also come, alongside their leader the Lonely King himself!

“Is that the legendary leader of the Icepeak Army, the Lonely King?”

“I heard that Daolord Darknorth led the Flamewing God in attacking and killing quite a few Black Emperors of the Icepeak Army! However, the Icepeak Army hasn’t responded at all. Now, the Lonely King has finally appeared.”

“Both the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army and Realmslord Windgrace of our Sixteen Realmverses Alliance has appeared as well. Hmph... they must have all come for the Flamewing God.”

“It is a legendary Chaos Primordial. Who WOULDN’T want it? Daolord Darknorth is just a Daolord, but no one would dare to offend him with the Flamewing God by his side. Now that he has failed his Daomerge, the Lonely King and Realmslord Windgrace have come out to fight over the beast.” This was what the Eternal Emperors were whispering mentally to each other.

In truth, they all wanted to just flee, but they were simply too slow. As for tearing through spacetime? The Icepeak Army emanated invisible ripples of such incredible power that they simply didn’t have the courage to do so, for fear that the Icepeak Army might kill them out of irritation.

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“Long ago, during the Dawn War, I encountered and fought far more Sithe than you have in your puny little Icepeak Army. If I activate the Blacksun, I’d massacre them all.” Realmslord Windgrace’s voice was filled with danger: “Lonely, if you are also interested in the Flamewing God, let’s

sit down and have a peaceful little competition over it. But for you to bring the entire Icepeak Army... if we actually got into a fight, it'd probably impact the entire Vastheaven Everworld. If we aren't careful, the shockwaves might hit Vastheaven Palace."

"Don't worry. If I wasn't able to control my power, there's no way I would've been able to live as long as I have." The Lonely King continued to sit atop his throne as he said coldly, "As for massacring my Icepeak Army? The only reason you were able to render so many merits during the Dawn War was because you had many other major powers helping you out and fighting alongside you."

"Gentlemen, let's sit down and talk this over," Ning said, wine cup in hand. His voice echoed out and shook the air above the everworld, but did so via riding alongside the natural ripples of the Dao. He would no longer use divine power or Immortal energy unless truly necessary.

"Don't get involved. Windgrace and I will decide amongst ourselves who is superior," the Lonely King replied coldly. "Come on out, Realmgrace. If you don't come out, I'm going to batter my way inside."

"Hmph." Realmlord Windgrace let out an angry snort, then rose to his feet. "Darknorth, my young friend, let me shoo the Lonely King away."

"Go ahead." Ning didn't stand on ceremony. Wine cup in hand, he simply watched as Realmlord Windgrace flew away.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The Lonely King's silver throne suddenly glowed with dazzling light which flew out towards the right and left sides of his throne. There, a second and third Lonely King appeared, all seated on silver thrones of their own. There were now three Lonely Kings seated on three silver thrones, and they all looked identical and had identical auras.

"Assemble the formation!" the Lonely King ordered. Whoosh! The silver diagrams covering his three Gold Emperor generals all lit up, as did the silver diagrams covering the many Black Emperors. They had always emanated dense, frigid auras, but now the aura swept out to form an entire silver-white wave of ice which roared out in every direction. The three generals and the many soldiers came together to form a strange

silver formation-diagram, with their bodies being covered by a layer of silver armor.

“Come. Let’s see if my Icepeak Army is stronger or if you are, Windgrace,” the Lonely King said coldly.

Realmslord Windgrace strode out of Vastheaven Palace, his eyes narrowing slightly. In truth, he was quite wary of the Icepeak Army. It wouldn’t be too hard for him to deal with the Lonely King, but the Icepeak Army represented an enormous number of opponents. If he wanted to deal with them, he’d have to activate the Blacksun multiple times! In addition, to actually kill a Black Emperor would require the Blacksun to unleash a high level of power each time... and this would cost him greatly.

He felt a 50% degree of confidence in dealing with the Lonely King and was 100% certain in being able to stay alive... but now that the entire Icepeak Army was here as well, his chances of victory were 10% at best, while his chances of staying alive dropped down to 80%-90%. Fortunately for him, the Lonely King felt rather nervous when faced with the Blacksun as well. This was why the Lonely King had immediately used a protective ability to divide himself into three.

“You split yourself into three bodies? So long as I wipe out all three of you, you’ll probably die,” Realmslord Windgrace said.

“Kill me? Go ahead and try.” The Lonely King’s voice remained as arrogant and domineering as ever. As soon as he spoke, the blood-red diamonds in his three foreheads simultaneously shot out rays of light.

Swish! Swish! Swish! The three blood-red rays of light flew even faster than Flamewing as they struck out towards Realmslord Windgrace.

Realmslord Windgrace remained quite calm. In front of him, a small fist-sized planet suddenly appeared out of nowhere. This planet was covered with countless runes, and it rapidly expanded to become thirty meters in diameter. Boom! Boom! Boom! It effortlessly deflected the attacks of the three blood-red rays of light. Realmslord Windgrace then walked straight inside the small planet.

“The Blacksun.” The Lonely King couldn’t help but feel frustrated. He

had more treasures, but Realmslord Windgrace's Blacksun was a terrifying war machine which had allowed the Sithe to influence and control an entire sector of the battlefield. The controller of the Blacksun could remain hidden within it in perfect security.

"He might have the Blacksun, but he isn't an actual Sithe; he doesn't have their limitless reservoirs of energy. I, on the other hand, have many tricks up my sleeve. I can have the entire Icepeak Army attack him. So long as they can surround and entrap the Blacksun, even if he remains hidden inside it'll be like he's in a prison. The only result will be death," the Lonely King mused. However, he also knew that his chances of actually killing Realmslord Windgrace were quite low, while the cost would be quite high.

"So long as I can force Realmslord Windgrace to flee with the Blacksun, I'll have won." The Lonely King knew exactly what he needed to do. If the Realmslord fled, he felt certain that Daolord Darknorth would know what decision to make.

"Attack!" the Lonely King commanded.

Boom! The three Lonely Kings on the three silver thrones began to build an aura of increasing and terrifying power. This aura was so strong that even Ning, who was calmly drinking wine below them, to grimace slightly. He raised his head to stare into the skies, then murmured softly, "The legends say that the Lonely King was once able to annihilate an entire otherverse. Was this the technique he used? I can't let them continue like this. If this fight progresses, they might accidentally destroy the Vastheaven Everworld."

"Halt!" Ning shouted as he rose to his feet, his voice tinged with a hint of anger.

Up above him were Realmslord Windgrace, the Lonely King, and the Icepeak Army. They were just about to engage in combat, but all of them turned to stare blankly.

"Are you afraid?" The three Lonely Kings stared downwards and laughed coldly: "Realmslord cannot kill me, and he doesn't even know all the tricks

I have available. Faced with my Icepeak Army, he'll probably have no choice but to flee. Thus, Daolord Darknorth... I recommend that you simply go ahead and hand the Flamewing God over to me and let it serve me. I am the most appropriate master for it."

Although the Lonely King had heard of the Blacksun long ago, when he actually saw Realmslord Windgrace produce it he couldn't help but feel uneasy.

The same was true for Realmslord Windgrace. When actually faced with the entire Icepeak Army, he could sense that this would be a truly vicious battle. It would be best for them to end this without a fight. Once Daolord Darknorth came out to openly support one side, the battle would become meaningless, because the side who had the help of the Flamewing God would be the side to win. The Flamewing God was virtually indestructible, and nothing could withstand its charge. Even the Blacksun would be knocked aside, while the Icepeak Army would be torn asunder.

"Darknorth, you can choose for yourself." Realmslord Windgrace looked at Ning.

"Hmph. Windgrace made you some promises, I expect?" The Lonely King said coldly, "But you should know what type of a person I am. No one can stop me from doing what I want to do. If anyone offends me, I'll pay any price needed to exact my revenge."

The entire area descended into a deep silence. All of the Hegemons and Emperors were quivering inside. They all knew of the Icepeak Army's brutal reputation. The Lonely King truly was a terrifying figure when angered.

"I've been waiting a long, long time for that Flamewing God," the Lonely King said coldly. "You have failed the Daomerge. Even if you live with the utmost of caution, you will still be nothing more than a puny Daolord with at most a thousand chaos cycles of longevity left. If you make an enemy out of me... I swear that I will annihilate any friends or family who have any connection to you whatsoever, and I'll wipe out your homeland as

well. Based on the reports I uncovered, you first appeared within the Badlands Territory, yes? Back then, you were just an Elder God! I imagine a puny Elder God couldn't have travelled all that far, which means your homeland should be near the Badlands Territory. Given my power and the power of the Icepeak Army, we'll definitely be able to locate it."

The three Lonely Kings stared intently at Ning, the diamonds in their foreheads glowing with that eerie, evil blood-red light.

"I trust you know what the right choice is." The Lonely King all but palpitated with malevolence.

Originally, Ning had been quite calm... but when he heard the Lonely King threaten to 'annihilate any friends or family who have any connection to you whatsoever' and say that Ning's 'homeland should be near the Badlands Territory', a cold look flashed through Ning's eyes.

Snick. Ning drew a sword from the black sheath on his back.

"What, are you about to go crazy? I hear that some Daolords who failed the Daomerge will cast caution to the wind and go berserk... but not even your Flamewing God is able to harm me in the slightest. No matter what, I'll be able to annihilate everyone and everything you care about!" Murder all but radiated from the Lonely King's eyes.

Whoosh. Ning took a single step forwards, his body flickering as he moved so fast he vastly surpassed both the Flamewing God and the light which had shot out of those blood-red diamonds. He appeared right next to the left-most Lonely King, and he delivered a casual chopping blow with his Northbow sword.

Swish. It was an ordinary strike which even the distant Hegemons and Eternal Emperors were able to see with clarity. It seemed so very slow, but it sliced through the Lonely King's neck with ease, cutting through his silver robes and even his golden body as though they were made out of tofu. The cut was so clean that one couldn't even see a wound actually appear on the Lonely King's neck.

The attack looked slow, but that was just a deceptive illusion caused by the temporal disruption inherent to this strike. In truth, it was so fast that

no one was able to react at all.

“Y-you...” the Lonely King’s eyes bulged out. An invisible power struck at him through karma, instantly wiping out his soul.

At his current level, Ning didn’t need to worry about which of the three was the ‘real’ one; Ning’s sword was connected to karma itself. Even if the ‘true’ Lonely King was hidden away in a completely different realmverse or otherverse, he still would have perished.

The Lonely King’s bulging eyes suddenly softened. A look of release appeared in his gaze, and his lips actually curved upwards in a smile. Moments later, his aura completely vanished.

All three Lonely Kings slumped downwards. Two of them completely vanished, while the other lay fallen atop his silver throne.

Ning glanced sideways at the already-perished Lonely King, then murmured softly, “You are right. As a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge, there’s a limit to how long I can live. I really didn’t want to use up any energy... but once you made those threats, I had no choice but to respond.”

Snick. Ning resheathed the Northbow sword back into the scabbard on his back.

Chapter 3: Accept Punishment

Ji Ning stared weighingly at the Lonely King's silver robes, his blood-red diamond, and the silver throne he had been seated on. These were all extremely powerful Sithe weapons. They were of little use to him, but of incalculable value to others. He immediately waved his hand, collecting the Lonely King's corpse, throne, and treasures.

The entire area was completely silent. The skies above Vastheaven Palace had previously been the arena for the face-off between Realm Lord Windgrace and the Icepeak Army. Moments ago, their auras had been flaring... but now, all of them held their breaths.

The terrified Emperors who were watching from afar were all staring in disbelief. Even the people inside Vastheaven Palace such as Emperor Solesky, Hegemon Azurefiend, and the Flamewing God all stared with heads upraised.

In this moment, every single cultivator's attention was completely focused upon the white-robed youth with the black sheath on his back.

His aura was quite ordinary, the aura of a Daolord. One could even sense that his truesoul was continuously crumbling away in tiny amounts. He was nothing more than a pitiful Daolord who had failed the Daomerge, but...

They all watched blankly as the white-robed figure collected the Lonely King's Sithe weapons. No one dared to stop him, even though they were deeply interested in those treasures.

"Master... h-he..." Su Youji stared with her head raised. Her eyes were brimming with tears, and her face was red with excitement.

She felt excited for Ning! She could still remember the first time they had met. Back then, he had been an Elder God while she had been an Ancestral Immortal. She had already been incomparably beautiful, with many cultivators wooing her in the hopes of becoming her Dao-companion. When she had met Ning, she had watched as Ning battled above his class against World-level cultivators, and thus she had

immediately chosen to voluntarily join him as his retainer.

She had followed him, watching him grow from up close. He had become increasingly dazzling, becoming the number one Daolord in all the history of the Flamedragon Realmverse. He had taken on a Hegemonic retainer and even tamed the Flamewing God... but in the end, he had still failed his Daomerge.

She felt a sense of great heartache and sorrow as she watched her master's truesoul slowly but surely crumble away... but then she saw that single, dazzling sword-strike. The Lonely King, someone who even Hegemons viewed with reverence, had collapsed supinely beneath that strike. First, Su Youji had felt stunned. Then, she had felt a true sense of excitement and delight for her master.

"Even though he has failed the Daomerge, he'll become the most dazzling star in all the night sky. Even though he will one day perish, his light shall illuminate countless realmverses and otherverses, and be forever whispered unto the end of time. He shall become one of the most unbelievable of legends." Su Youji stared upwards at him, her eyes blazing with eagerness.

"Such power! H-how could he have... how..." Emperor Solesky mumbled nonsensically to himself as he stared.

"The Lonely King? Finished with just one strike of the sword?" Hegemon Azurefiend's wizened old face was contorted with shock. "I've wandered the vast Chaosverse for many years, but I've never even heard of such a thing. Most likely, only the exalted Autarchs or perhaps the supreme members of the Sithe race, those Exalts, would be capable of such a thing."

In the cultivator civilizations, the only ones capable of such an act were the Autarchs. Although the Sithe Exalts were weaker than the Autarchs, they were still definitely above the Otherverse Lords in power. They were unfathomably powerful and even faster than the Flamewing God. In a direct clash, the Flamewing God would be suppressed by a Sithe Exalt even though Flamewing had an indestructible body! Three Exalts working together had actually managed to capture it alive. In the cultivator

civilizations, only Autarchs were capable of capturing Chaos Primordials.

Now... a Daolord who had failed the Daomerge had actually reached that same, terrifying level of power?

How powerful was he? Was he comparable to those Sithe Exalts, or was he even stronger than them and close to the Autarchs in might? The Hegemons and Emperors had no idea, and it didn't really matter. The only thing that mattered was this truth: Hegemons and Otherverse Lords would all perish with just one strike from Ning's sword.

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After Ning collected the Lonely King's treasures, he swept the area with his gaze, then smiled. "Realmslord Windgrace and the Icepeak Army, please follow me. As for the other Emperors and Hegemons, you'll have to pardon me; I won't be able to accompany you for now."

"You are being far too courteous, Daolord Darknorth." The ordinary Eternal Emperors off in the distance all felt surprised and delighted by his courtesy. They all relaxed quite a bit. Normally, they had to behave with great reverence when they were in the presence of Hegemons. This truly peerless Daolord had just slain the Lonely King with ease and was so powerful that even Hegemons wouldn't dare to breathe too loudly in front of him, and yet he spoke with such courtesy!

"Daolord Darknorth, I truly have never even heard of sword-arts like yours."

"Impressive, truly impressive. I, Daoist Violetstar, have truly been enlightened today. I've wandered for over ten million chaos cycles and visited many realmverses, but I've never been as stunned as I am right now. Even if I died the very next instant, I would still feel that it would all have been worth it."

"Daolord Darknorth, we won't bother you any further."

"We'll leave now." The Emperors still felt a mixture of reverence and fear. Right now, they were even more nervous when facing Daolord Darknorth than they had been when facing Realmslord Windgrace or the

Lonely King.

Ning simply smiled, watching as the Emperors all departed.

Hegemon Brightshore, Hegemon Windrain, Hegemon Netherlily, Daoist Bluestone, and a number of others all flew over. The others all felt rather nervous, but Hegemon Brightshore had always been on very good terms with Ning. As a result, he felt a bit more relaxed. His ancient eyes were filled with a look of amazement, and he let out a sigh: "Darknorth, after seeing your sword... I still feel panic in my heart."

"I didn't want to draw my sword," Ning said. "But the Lonely King was protected by Sithe artifacts. If I didn't draw my sword, I wouldn't be able to kill him. Using my weapons and exerting my energy will result in my truesoul crumbling even faster."

"Correct." Hegemon Brightshore nodded. "From now on, you should avoid fighting whenever possible. Your sword-arts truly are dazzling to behold! A pity that we won't be able to see it too many times in the future."

"You win some, you lose some. All you can do is meet it with a calm heart," Ning said with a smile.

"Darknorth?" Daoist Bluestone smiled. "You said that you had to draw your sword if you wanted to kill the Lonely King. Are you saying that you wouldn't even need to draw your sword to deal with us?"

Ning nodded. "Correct."

"You might not need to draw your sword, but you'd still need to use up a bit of energy to deal with us," Emperor Goldisle said with a chortle. "So it's best if you don't just go crazy and start killing everyone, Daolord Darknorth."

"Goldisle, I won't go crazy anytime soon, but... generally speaking, I should be able to kill my foes just by activating the might of my Dao. There's no need for me to actually use up any of my divine power or Immortal energy," Ning said. If one didn't use one's weapons, divine power, or Immortal energy, the amount of power that one could summon

simply from the might of his Dao itself was quite low.

But... Ning's Dao was the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, and it represented the true prime essence of the Dao of the Sword itself! The domain generated by his Dao might not be able to kill the likes of the Lonely King, nor would it be enough to kill Otherverse Lords who were protected by the prime essences of their own otherverses, but it was more than capable of killing ordinary Hegemons. Ning wouldn't need to use up any of his own power at all.

"You...!" A sour look appeared on Goldisle's face. "Can't you let us save just a tiny bit of face?"

"Haha, enough chit-chat. I need to go speak with Windgrace and the Icepeak Army," Ning said.

"Right. We'll head off then."

"If there's anything you need, just send word. We'll definitely help out."

"We're off." The supreme powers of the Flamedragon Realmverse began to leave, their hearts filled with mixed emotions.

In truth, by now they were able to guess that the reason why Ning was so strong was most likely due to him being in control of the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. But... he had also failed the Daomerge. There was no doubt about that.

"What a true pity. A peerless major power is going to slowly fade away, and there's nothing anyone can do." Hegemon Windrain sighed.

"We won't be able to see his dazzling sword-arts many more times in the future. It will eventually become nothing more than a myth," Hegemon Netherlily said.

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Ning simply stood there. It was for Realmslord Windgrace and the Icepeak Army to come meet him.

"Daolord Darknorth." A look of shock was in Realmslord Windgrace's eyes, and he actually bowed slightly. "I truly am stunned by the sword-arts

I just saw. The Autarchs might be powerful, but their power comes from their Daobirth, where 'one Dao births many Daos'. As far as the pure Dao of the Sword goes... you, Daolord Darknorth, are number one in all the Chaosverse. I was a bit too arrogant when I came and asked for the Flamewing God; I'd like to ask you to pardon me. If there's anything you need, just let me know. If you wish to punish me for my impertinence, I'm willing to accept it."

Ning nodded. No one had ever gained eternity for an Omega Dao in all of history; he was the first. That meant he was naturally the first to be the master of an Eternal Omega Sword Dao. He truly was the number one master of the sword in the entire history of the Chaosverse!

"Windgrace. Icepeak Army." Ning's gaze turned to the nearby members of the Icepeak Army. The three Gold Emperors and the many Black Emperors of the Icepeak Army all felt very nervous.

"Respectful greetings, Daolord Darknorth. We truly are ashamed to have offended you by our actions, and we too are willing to accept any punishment you may mete out. Now that you have slain the Lonely King, we actually feel a sense of gratitude in our hearts," Lord Wulf said respectfully. "Myself, brother Wei, and brother Solefinger, along with the many Black Emperors under our command... although we gained the power of Gold Emperors and Black Emperors and became much more powerful, we lost something as well. Our lives fell under the complete control of the Lonely King, and we have never dared to oppose his commands. Now that you have slain the Lonely King, we have finally been released."

Ning nodded. "I won't punish any of you... but there is something I need you all to do for me."

"Please tell us what you need, Daolord Darknorth." The three generals and the many Black Emperors all respectfully awaited Ning's orders.

Chapter 4: Searching For Nuwa

“I wish to find a female cultivator,” Ji Ning said.

“Find a female cultivator?” The three generals and the Black Emperors were all rather puzzled, as was the nearby Realmslord Windgrace. They all knew that Ning had trained for a fairly brief period of time and hadn’t travelled to many places; it should be easy for him to find a female cultivator. There was no need to send the entire Icepeak Army to carry out a task like this.

“Her name is Nuwa,” Ning said. “She hasn’t trained for very long either, and she should be incredibly talented. She might be a Daolord, but she might also have become an Eternal Emperor. She is most likely located in a place which is extremely far away from the Flamedragon Realmverse.”

Ning hadn’t visited too many places, but he had accumulated records on all the Daolords and Emperors of the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance. There had been no records of Nuwa at all!

Clearly, ever since Nuwa left the Three Realms she had never again appeared within the territory of the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance. After Ning had mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, he had reached an inconceivably high level of insight. He was now in control of one of the prime essences of the Chaosverse, the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword. In other words, he now had a vague understanding of how the entire Chaosverse itself functioned, giving him a greater degree of insight into fate! Mother Nuwa and Ning were connected to each other by karma, because the very first step Ning had taken as a mortal... was to study the [Nuwa Painting]!

After Ning had completed and mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, he was able to sense through the whispers of fate that Nuwa was still alive in an extremely remote part of the Chaosverse!

“Nuwa?” The three generals, Realmslord Windgrace, and the Black Emperors all revealed puzzled expressions.

“None of you have heard of her?” Ning couldn’t help but feel a bit

disappointed when he saw the looks on their faces. Realmslord Windgrace had many friends but was permanently stationed in the Hiddenfiend Realmverse; it wasn't surprising that he hadn't heard of Nuwa. The Icepeak Army, however, roved the Chaosverse and visited many places. Ning had thought that they might have heard of her, especially since Ning felt certain that Nuwa's level of talent must have led her to accomplish great things!

It must be remembered that when the Pangu Chaosworld and the Seamless Chaosworld collided, that represented the smashing together of two Autarch-level godgems. In the resulting battle, Nuwa had broken through to the World level! Karmic luck had descended upon her, resulting in a great deal of the essence fragments of the Autarch's godgems to swirl around her as well.

It was incredibly rare and marvelous for a cultivator to break through to the World level without any guidance whatsoever. Even Ning had merely been at the Elder God/Ancestral Immortal level when he left the Three Realms. True, Ning had only trained for a fairly brief period of time... but Mother Nuwa was definitely in a class of her own during the 'Primordial Era' of the Pangu Chaosworld. She had definitely surpassed the Three Sovereigns, Tathagata, Three Purities, and Subhuti, and she was the unquestioned leader of the Nuwa Alliance. By now, even Subhuti and Windfiend had fused multiple Supreme Daos together. Ning felt certain that Nuwa wouldn't be inferior to any of them.

That meant that Nuwa would probably be quite famous in the region she was currently in! If the Icepeak Army had visited her region, it was highly likely that they would've heard mention of the name 'Nuwa'.

"Haven't heard of her." Lord Wulf shook his head, then turned and barked, "Have any of you heard of a 'Nuwa' before?"

"No."

"We've roamed through many places, but we've never heard of a powerful female cultivator named Nuwa."

"Haven't heard of her." They all shook their heads.

Ning turned to look at Realmslord Windgrace, who immediately shook his head. "I haven't heard of her either. Daolord Darknorth, the Icepeak Army has visited many places. If even they haven't heard of her, she's not going to be easy to find."

Ning frowned. "Nuwa has only trained for a short period of time; perhaps she isn't well-known yet. Icepeak Army, the mission I have for you is for you to ride realmships to one realmverse after another. Spread the word on my behalf! Say that I, Daolord Darknorth, am searching for a female cultivator named 'Nuwa'. She should have only been training for roughly a hundred chaos cycles of 'normal' time. You can also make it known that I, Daolord Darknorth, will owe a debt to the first person to find Nuwa for me. I can use treasures to pay off my debt, but I can also help deal with someone... such as the Lonely King, who I slew!"

"This..." Realmslord Windgrace and the Icepeak Army were shocked. This offer was a crazy one. The Lonely King had been an incredible figure in the Chaosverse, a mighty ruler in his sector. Daolord Darknorth's promise was definitely enough to drive many major powers wild with excitement.

A favor from Daolord Darknorth was definitely something worth having!

"Hurry up and spread the word to as many realmverses as you can. This is the only task I have for you," Ning said. "Once I find Nuwa, you'll gain your freedom. If I cannot find her, then you'll be released from this oath after I die and my Dao vanishes."

"Very well."

"Don't worry, Daolord Darknorth." The three generals and the Black Emperors all immediately agreed. This was an incredibly simple task; all they had to do was serve as a messenger! Daolord Darknorth wasn't going to be around for much longer; at most, he'd survive for another thousand chaos cycles. This was quite easy. The Icepeak Army immediately swore the requisite lifeblood oaths.

"Go now. If anyone discovers Nuwa, they can immediately inform Windgrace. When he knows, I'll know," Ning said. In the end, he himself

simply didn't know enough people. Even if someone did locate Nuwa, it would be quite difficult for that person to find Ning. Windgrace, however, had a wide network of friends; it would be far easier for others to reach him.

"Understood." The members of the Icepeak Army all assented to his order, then excitedly departed.

How could they not be excited? This wasn't the calamitous punishment they had expected; in fact, it was a huge blessing in disguise! Now that the Lonely King was dead, their lives were their own again. They would truly be free once more. How many major powers were truly willing to serve as pawns and footsoldiers for another? Long ago, they had been weak and thus lusted after the power which becoming a Black Emperor or Gold Emperor would grant them, which was why they had gritted their teeth and accepted servitude.

Now? They didn't lose any of the power they had gained, nor was their fate in the hands of another. They were all free. Wasn't this a wonderful thing? And once they helped Daolord Darknorth locate 'Nuwa', they would become truly and perpetually free.

"Windgrace." Ning looked at Windgrace. "You can probably guess what I need you to do."

"A simple task. I'll send the word out as widely as I can," Realmslord Windgrace said.

"Good." Ning nodded. "Sorry to trouble you, Realmslord."

"Tis nothing at all." Realmslord Windgrace secretly let out a sigh of relief as well. Daolord Darknorth truly was an easy-going person. Many cultivators in his position would behave much more ruthlessly! Given that Ning had already failed the Daomerge, no one would've been surprised if he had turned ruthless and chose to simply kill Windgrace. If that happened, Windgrace wouldn't even have had a chance to feel regret! Thus, he had waited nervously for Ning's judgment, not daring to argue in the slightest. But now, it seemed, Ning's request was quite simple. All he had to do was to spread the word.

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The story of the legendary battle which occurred after Daolord Darknorth's attempted Daomerge was quickly spread by Realmslord Windgrace, the Hegemons and Emperors of the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance, and the Icepeak Army. The latter rode realmships in every direction, spreading the news far and wide. As a result, word spread like a tempest!

Although the Chaosverse was so vast that spreading information was usually quite difficult, this particular bit of news was utterly astonishing, especially given how famous the Lonely King was. As a result, news truly did spread quite fast.

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"Old man! Old man! A giant foot came crashing down through the clouds and slamming against the surface of an enormous planet, causing the earth to tremble. The towering figure to which the giant foot belonged continued to bellow, "Hurry up and wake up, you blind old man!"

"FUCK OFF!" a hoarse, ear-piercing voice rang out from deep underneath the earth.

"Hurry up and wake up! Something big just happened. Stop sleeping! This time, the towering figure stomped down on the ground using his two bare feet, causing the earth to shudder and shake.

"One day, I'm going to EAT you," the hoarse, unpleasant voice said. A boom rang out, followed by the entire planet exploding as an ugly black bird appeared in its center. This bird had just a single eye, but the eye was shut. It looked rather like an owl, but it had a pair of extremely large black wings.

"I've got some good news for you, you blind old man! A while ago, the Lonely King sent the Icepeak Army after you and forced you into fleeing, right?" The speaker was an alien Hegemon dressed in simple armor and who had two furry heads. "The Lonely King died!"

"Why are you mentioning this again? I TOLD you to never... huh? Did

you just say the Lonely King died?” The black avian let out a startled, ear-piercing screech.

“It’s true! Word has spread to our Fivebug Realmverses. You’re probably the only one who doesn’t know because you spend all your time sleeping!” the two-headed Hegemon said.

“How’d he die?” the black avian immediately asked. “Given how strong the Lonely King was, so long as he didn’t do anything suicidal there shouldn’t be anyone capable of killing him.”

“Heh heh heh... I have to tell you a story about someone truly remarkable named Daolord Darknorth.” The two-headed Hegemon immediately began to narrate the story.

Chapter 5: Arrangements

In a different, incredibly distant part of the Chaosverse.

A vast layer of golden clouds could be seen here within the emptiness of space. Above the clouds, there were many divine palaces that emanated rays of golden light. The palaces were all connected together and emanated such incredible light that it illuminated the cosmos.

Within a side room inside the tallest, most towering palace. A white-winged man was standing by himself, staring into the endless darkness outside his window. He said calmly, "Demon Empress, why have you come here?"

Another person was within the room, a blood-winged woman with a single horn. She had a smile on her face that was filled with strange, beguiling charisma. "God Emperor Helong, we were once Dao-companions. Why must you be so heartless to me? For the sake of your Dao, of your [God Emperor's Apocalypse], you were willing to give up even your Dao-companions. Even if you do succeed in becoming an Autarch, would it all be worth it?"

"Karma brought us into each other's path, then took us away from each other. Our ties are ended," God Emperor Helong said calmly. "No need to waste time on such nonsense. Why have you come here?"

"You've always thought of yourself as being an extraordinary figure," the blood-winged woman smirked, "But have you heard of someone known as 'Daolord Darknorth'?"

"Daolord Darknorth. A Daolord?" God Emperor Helong was puzzled.

"Hmph. I knew you wouldn't know." The blood-winged woman said, "While meeting with a few of my friends, I heard some interesting news. You should've heard of the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army, yes?"

God Emperor Helong said coldly, "He was destroyed by his love and went insane. He's not worth discussing."

"But he was still fairly strong," the blood-winged woman laughed. "Are

you able to kill him?”

“He engaged in the Ritual Sacrificium to become a Golden Emperor, and is also protected by multiple Sithe war machines. I heard that he once destroyed an otherverse. I admit that he’s quite strong. Killing him would be very difficult... but someone like him, who purely focuses on power, will have a Dao-heart which is riddled with flaws,” God Emperor Helong said disdainfully.

“The Daolord Darknorth I just mentioned to you? He killed the Lonely King with just one swing of his sword,” the blood-winged woman said.

“Impossible!” God Emperor Helong’s face completely changed. “Impossible. There’s no way it could be done with one strike, and no way it could be done by a Daolord! One would at least have to have the power of a Sithe Exalt to accomplish this!”

The blood-winged woman said, “Let me finish. Daolord Darknorth is an incredibly talented figure, and he trains in one of the legendary Omega Daos. He convinced a Hegemon to follow him as a retainer, and also tamed a Chaos Primordial! Not long ago he finally attempted the Daomerge! Although he failed in the Daomerge, the failure allowed him to truly understand and comprehend the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, and so he used just one strike of his sword to slay the Lonely King, who had come to take his Chaos Primordial from him. Realmslord Windgrace and the Icepeak Army were so terrified that they immediately moved to obey all his commands.”

“Eternal Omega Sword Dao?” God Emperor Helong was stunned.

“There’s always someone stronger than the strongest! Even in the cultivator civilizations, there are now those aside from the Autarchs who are more powerful than you, such as Daolord Darknorth.” The blood-winged woman smirked. “Do you still think you are all that extraordinary? You aren’t even close to being his equal.”

“An Omega Dao can actually be perfected into eternity?” A stunned look was in God Emperor Helong’s eyes. “Incredible, simply incredible. I truly am not a match for him. I, Helong, have only ever admired the Autarchs.

Now, I also feel admiration for Daolord Darknorth.”

The woman was stunned. She had wanted to use the story of Daolord Darknorth to belittle the endlessly arrogant God Emperor. Who would’ve thought that Helong would immediately begin to feel admiration for Daolord Darknorth?

“If I could borrow his Eternal Omega Sword Dao and study from it, how wonderful that would be!” the God Emperor murmured softly, eagerness in his eyes.

“Stop dreaming. The Dao is not to be casually taught to others, and only Daolord Darknorth has ever successfully mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao! You can stop dreaming about it,” the woman mocked. However, she didn’t see any anger or frustration on God Emperor Helong’s face. This displeased her greatly, causing her to turn and leave. Still... at least she had achieved her goal of mocking the man.

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The Twelve Palaces of Brightshore, especially the Sword Palace, were filled with just as many excited discussions as the outside world.

“I heard that our Palace Lord Darknorth has already been praised as the number one expert of the Endless Territories.”

Right. The Eternal Emperors all seem to be talking about this. Palace Lord Darknorth failed in the Daomerge, but he has actually reached an inconceivable level of power as a result of it. Even Hegemons are far beneath him!”

“Even Hegemons are far beneath him? How powerful must he be?!”

Although the Daolords of the Sword Palace didn’t really know the details or what the Icepeak Army was, there had been so many Emperors present watching the battle that details of it had quickly leaked. Thus, the Daolords all knew one thing – Daolord Darknorth might have failed the Daomerge, but he was so powerful that he surpassed even the Hegemons by a great amount. He was able to kill Hegemons with a flick of his wrist! This caused the countless Daolords to feel stunned, and the Daolords of

the Sword Palace were especially proud.

“Even Hegemons are far beneath him?” The Universe treasure within Armaments Gorge, the broken sword, suddenly manifested a pink-robed woman above the sword. She was the sword’s spirit, and she couldn’t believe this news. “How can someone be more powerful than a Hegemon? Are we talking about that silly Daolord who visited me twice?”

“Hmph. Even if it’s true... so what? He failed his Daomerge, which means he will die soon,” the sword-spirit murmured to herself. “Besides... given how he asked me to join him last time, he probably still doesn’t have any Universe treasures. Hmph.”

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The many major powers in the vast Chaosverse, including the Hegemons, the Emperors, and other incredibly famous ancient figures who were on par with Realmlord Windgrace and the Lonely King, were all stunned by the news they heard regarding this ‘Daolord Darknorth’.

The weaker ones were able to gain a general sense of how terrifying Daolord Darknorth was... but only the strongest ones truly understood what the ‘Eternal Omega Sword Dao’ truly represented! All of them knew that Daolord Darknorth was most likely second only to the Autarchs in all the parts of the Chaosverse ruled over by the cultivator civilizations! Even though he failed the Daomerge and his life would be brief as a result, no one would dare to challenge him so long as he was alive.

The legend of Daolord Darknorth only continued to grow... as did a second person’s name. ‘Nuwa’.

Daolord Darknorth was searching for a female cultivator called Nuwa. The first person to find her and send word of her to Daolord Darknorth would be owed a favor by the Daolord! Such a favor had tremendous uses and implications.

“Nuwa?”

“Have you heard of a powerful female cultivator named Nuwa?”

“An incredible Daolord or a powerful Hegemon? Never heard of her.”

“Based on what Daolord Darknorth has told us, Nuwa has probably only trained for a hundred chaos cycles or so. She can’t be all that strong. Maybe she’s already dead?”

“Impossible. Think about the level which Daolord Darknorth has reached; he’s second only to the Autarchs! How could he be mistaken about her being alive?”

News continued to spread.

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The Flamedragon Realmverse.

Rumors continued to bubble and froth in the outside world. By now, Vastheaven Palace had become something of a holy place, the most unique power in all the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance.

Ning, however, was busy taking care of many things he had to handle.

Whoosh. Ning and his team rode the realmship into the Terror Starsea.

“Master?” Flamewing looked at Ning, puzzled.

“Here we are.” Ning stared up front.

“Here we are?” Hegemon Azurefiend stared towards the front as well, puzzled. The only thing in front of them was an area of jumbled primordial chaos. “There’s nothing in front of us.”

“A cave is hidden there,” Ning said with a laugh, “And it holds a world where my third disciple, Skywind, resides. I’ll go in first.” As he spoke, he took a single step forwards and disappeared from the realmship.

Ning’s mastery over the Dao of Spacetime was such that he was able to easily enter the cave within that hidden pocket of spacetime, while his sword-light was even more easily capable of cutting a hole into it.

“Same old cave.” Ning swept the area with his gaze. He saw the two Hegemon’s corpses as well as the Black Emperor’s corpse.

“Disciple.” Ning stared into the Black Emperor’s corpse. His gaze pierced through the dimensions, allowing him to see Daolord Skywind within a

planet inside that corpse.

“I have several disciples... but you, alas, have the toughest destiny,” Ning sighed softly. His mastery over the Dao of Karma had long ago reached the Archon level. Now that he had mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, he was able to see even farther into the future.

The future was in a constant state of flux, but he was now able to see the vast majority of possible futures. Now that he had failed his Daomerge, he turned to focus on preparing things for his family and friends. As for the Three Realms, he had naturally spent even more effort there. He was searching for Nuwa for the sake of the Three Realms. As Ning saw it, Mother Nuwa had to be fairly powerful and was most likely capable of helping out and protecting it. Ning was planning to give the Sithe war machines he had acquired from the Lonely King over to Nuwa.

As for his disciples? His first disciple, Bluecliff Xiaoyu, lived a carefree life, but as a result she had accomplished the least. There was no need to discuss her.

His second disciple was ‘Green Bamboo’ Yang Quding. Ning had engaged in some divinations on his behalf and had discovered that Yang Quding was a person of remarkable mental prowess. He would be able to solve even the most dangerous of problems, and he was surrounded by great luck. His future potential was virtually limitless; most likely, he would become the most accomplished of Ning’s disciples.

His third disciple was Skywind. Skywind was the best-suited to the Dao of the Sword, but he was stubborn and antisocial, and he was the most vicious of his peers. That stubborn, eccentric personality would bring him many problems. Ning had scried the future, and it appeared as though Skywind would be incredibly dazzling amongst the other Daolords of the Fourth Step, but he would be constantly surrounded by trouble. The ties of karma surrounding him indicated that he would actually fail his Daomerge without question.

This was much like how Emperor Waveshift had once divined that Ning would definitely fail the Daomerge.

His fourth disciple... to this very day, no one had acquired the legacy Ning had hidden, the legacy which would result in that person becoming Ning's fourth disciple. Ning had the vague feeling that his fourth disciple would not be born for a long, long time.

His fifth and sixth disciples were both at Vastheaven Palace and so were blessed with many advantages. There was no need for Ning to worry about them.

"Skywind," Ning murmured softly, "Everyone chooses their own paths in life. The only thing I can do to help you is this."

Ning waved a finger. Countless streams of sword-light began to gather together, coming to form a formation. Ning placed some presents inside the formation, which had many illusions and other tempering techniques within them. It also included various techniques involving the Dao of the Sword, some spirit-fruits and treasures, as well as treasures which were unremarkable to Ning but which would be of tremendous help to Skywind.

"Of all my disciples, the one I worry about the most is you." Ning shook his head slowly. "However... in the end, I'll still have to eventually let go."

Chapter 6: Nuwa's Trail

There was a limit to how much longer he would live. He certainly wouldn't be able to hold on until Skywind's Daomerge.

The Lonely King had said that if Ji Ning was extremely careful, he'd be able to live a thousand chaos cycles... but in truth, Ning knew that his Eternal Omega Sword Dao was actually the same thing as the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword, one of the prime essences of the Chaosverse. This Dao had a nurturing effect on his soul, which meant that the truesoul's crumbling speed would be fairly slow.

Different Daos would have different effects. For example, those who trained in the Dao of Water would have stronger protective abilities and invulnerable forms. In turn, the destructive Daos such as the Dao of the Sword were superior in offensive power.

Different Daos had different strengths. Although the Eternal Omega Sword Dao was quite incredible, it still represented the Dao of the Sword and thus it didn't have an exaggeratedly massive effect on the soul. Still, there was something else that was special about Ning – the azureflower mist energy! This was a very unique type of energy which Autarch Awakener, the master of the Azureflower Estate, had devised based on the cultivation methods of the Sithe race. It was a technique that allowed for divine power, Immortal energy, and heartforce to all be transformed into azureflower mist energy. It had marvelous effects on the truesoul and made it much stronger.

“If I can avoid using up my energy, I can live a maximum of eight thousand chaos cycles,” Ning mused. “But if I have to use my energy, my lifespan will dramatically lessen to just three or four chaos cycles.”

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Ning spent the rest of his time in Vastheaven Palace training his students and fellow disciples. Every so often, he'd go roaming through the Three Realms.

While he wandered through the many chaosworlds of the Three Realms,

Ning ended up choosing a seventh disciple. His seventh disciple was an Ancestral Immortal who had been known as 'Grand Immortal Almonder', and who had been a plant-spirit who had trained to the point of understanding the Dao.

It must be remembered that after such a long period of development, the Three Realms now had so many chaosworlds and experts that a single Ancestral Immortal truly didn't count for much. Grand Immortal Almonder had a very eccentric personality who rather reminded Ning of his old friend, Patriarch Lu Dongbin... because the man loved to play matchmaker!

He tweaked events to ensure that lovers met with each other, and when he encountered people he didn't like he would play all sorts of tricks on each other. In fact, he would sometimes make people he truly disliked end up attached to each other.

While wandering the Three Realms, Ning stumbled upon this 'Grand Immortal Almonder'. He followed Almonder in secret, watching for some time. Almonder seemed to be eccentric and rather lazy when it came to cultivation. It seemed obvious to many that he would have no future prospects, which was why none of the Daolords or World-level cultivators of the Three Realms had taken him on as a disciple or had taught him.

However, Ning had the feeling that this 'Grand Immortal Almonder' was an extraordinary figure. When Ning scried his future, Ning came to understand that Almonder truly was a piece of unpolished jade. Given that Ning had slowly grown fond of the young fellow, Ning chose to take him on as a seventh disciple.

News that Daolord Darknorth had taken on a seventh disciple, 'Grand Immortal Almonder', stunned the Three Realms and caused quite a few Immortals and Fiendgods to stare blankly in confusion.

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Ning lived a relaxed life, waiting for news of Nuwa.

Roughly 69 million years after Ning's Daomerge attempt. Within an alternate universe.

A giant boulder was levitating within an empty patch of space. Two major powers were seated in the lotus position atop this boulder, drinking wine and making merry. The empty area around them was displaying images of various things occurring within this otherverse.

“Isn’t Daolord Darknorth just incredible?” the muscular man with tousled golden hair said with a sigh.

“He really is. If you didn’t tell me about him, I wouldn’t even know about it. I really cannot imagine that someone was able to kill the legendary Lonely King of the Icepeak Army with just one blow of the sword. He truly is incredible.” The bald, red-robed Hegemon Goodsong nodded and sighed, “I was stunned when I heard this. I wish I was there to witness it all in person! Haha.”

“Haha, Daolord Darknorth is in the Flamedragon Realmverse. That place is way, way too far away from us. You’d have to travel through several incredibly vast stretches of the Great Dark to get there. I’m surprised the news even made it this far. I’m an Otherverse Lord with quite a few friends, which is why I heard about this,” the muscular man said.

“It really is far.” The bald, red-robed man nodded. Some realmverses were fairly close to each other; realmships could allow you to travel between them in just a few tens of thousands of years. Others were hundreds of times farther away, separated by that endless darkness with no realmverses inside which many cultivators referred to as the Great Dark. To Emperors who weren’t willing to pay for travel via realmship, traversing the Great Dark would simply take too much time; tens of millions of chaos cycles, or even longer! Most weren’t willing to travel too far.

“Oh, right! There’s something I forgot to tell you. Daolord Darknorth is searching for someone called Nuwa.” The muscular man laughed. “He said that he would owe a favor to anyone who does find Nuwa. He’d be willing to hand over a treasure, or even help carry out a task... including a task like killing major powers on the level of the Lonely King.”

“Nuwa? Who is Nuwa?” Hegemon Goodsong asked.

“A female cultivator who supposedly has only trained for a hundred chaos cycles. Daolord Darknorth says that she’s probably an incredibly talented Daolord or an Eternal Emperor,” the muscular man said.

“Oh.” Hegemon Goodsong began to feel excited.

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One hour later, the red-robed Hegemon Goodsong left the otherverse and reached another realmverse which was connected to the former via a spacetime tunnel. By now, he was no longer able to suppress his excitement.

“Nuwa? A female cultivator who has only trained for a hundred chaos cycles?” Hegemon Goodsong narrowed his eyes. “Last time, when I met with Patriarch Treewind of the Bluesky Realmverse, he brought a female disciple named ‘Nuwa’. Back then, he praised her multiple times and described her as being incredibly talented. She was just a Daolord of the Third Step back then; I wonder how she is doing now.”

“I’ll go and take a look. She’s probably the person Daolord Darknorth of the Flamedragon Realmverse is searching for.” Hegemon Goodsong immediately went off to go hire a realmship.

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Realmship owners generally charged the same for a hundred million year flight as they would a hundred thousand year flight. They were only hired every so often, after all; they had to make the most of it. Thus, this trip ‘merely’ cost Hegemon Goodsong roughly 30% of his networth. Although he felt sorrow over the cost, it was within the limits of what he could accept.

“Hegemon Goodsong, we just reached the Bluesky Realmverse.”

“Wait for me here as I go test out the information I heard.”

“Don’t worry. It only took me three million years to get here; I’ll fly you around until the hundred million years are up.” The Hegemon in command of the realmship was quite relaxed; to earn so much treasure in exchange for merely a hundred million years of his time was an absolute

steal.

Hegemon Goodsong went off searching. Soon, he found Patriarch Treewind's residence. A handsome young disciple was in front of Patriarch Treewind's tree palace, and this disciple respectfully welcomed Hegemon Goodsong inside.

"Hegemon, the Patriarch has gone off on a trip to the Blazesun Domain," the disciple said respectfully. "His avatar has left this place to go meet with the avatars of his friends to ensure that they are in constant contact. Almost all of them have gone off to the Blazesun Domain."

"The Blazesun Domain? Your Patriarch is quite bold. Where is that female disciple of his, 'Nuwa'?" Hegemon Goodsong immediately asked.

"Senior apprentice-sister Nuwa?" The youth was startled. He immediately responded. "Don't you know? Half a chaos cycle ago, she completed her Daomerge and became a Hegemon. It was her recommendation that they visit the Blazesun Domain. After the Patriarch and the other major powers agreed, they joined together to accompany her there."

"She became a Hegemon?" Hegemon Goodsong's eyes bulged out. "But she's so young! She hasn't been training for too long, has she?"

"Senior apprentice-sister Nuwa's experiences have been extraordinary. Supposedly, the Patriarch discovered her in the Blazesun Domain and brought her back here," the disciple said. "I've only known her for around a hundred chaos cycles."

"A hundred chaos cycles?" Hegemon Goodsong felt a sense of excitement. He asked curiously, "You say that she was discovered in the Blazesun Domain?" This was new to him.

"Yes. Many people know this. For her to appear there means that she probably has an extraordinary background. She truly is a monstrously talented figure. She became a Hegemon in just a hundred chaos cycles! This is unbelievable even to me," the disciple said.

The more Hegemon Goodsong heard, the more excited he became. This

was right, this was definitely right. The legendary Daolord Darknorth said that Nuwa was either an incredible Daolord or had succeeded in the Daomerge. No wonder he had spoken with such certainty! Nuwa truly was incredible... but Daolord Darknorth was even more incredible. He had killed the Lonely King as if the latter was just a chicken, which meant that in the cultivator civilizations he was second only to the Autarchs.

“I was right. She’s the one. She’s an incredible figure, but Daolord Darknorth is even more incredible. There’s no way this could all be a coincidence. It has to be her!” Hegemon Goodsong mused silently, “And she actually came from the Blazesun Domain. It seems that she and Daolord Darknorth must know each other.”

Chapter 7: First Mention of Darknorth

After verifying that Nuwa of the Bluesky Realmverse was indeed the same person Daolord Darknorth was seeking, Hegemon Goodsong felt both delight and nervousness. “I need to hurry up and notify Realmslord Windgrace of this. If I’m too slow, someone else might report it ahead of me! Ugh... we’re incredibly far away from Realmslord Windgrace’s territory. It won’t be easy to get this information over to him.”

The Bluesky Realmverse was indescribably far away from Realmslord Windgrace’s ‘Hiddenfiend Realmverse’. Even though word of Ji Ning and his request had spread like wildfire, it had still taken sixty million years before Hegemon Goodsong had found out and then been the first to locate Nuwa. If he had to fly over to the Hiddenfiend Realmverse via realmship, just passing through the numerous special zones of the Chaosverse which lay between them would probably take several billion years! This was probably more than enough time for another major power to also discover Nuwa and then notify Windgrace.

“Realmslord Windgrace is quite famous. He rendered incredible merits during the Dawn War and has been taught by numerous Autarchs,” Hegemon Goodsong mused. “He’s even able to contact the legendary Autarch Titanos. Grand Emperor Skydeep is the closest person to the Bluesky Domain who is also able to contact Autarch Titanos. I should be able to quickly notify Realmslord Windgrace through him.”

“Grand Emperor Skydeep... I need to hurry up and go visit him.” Hegemon Windgrace used his hired realmship to hurry towards Grand Emperor Skydeep’s residence.

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Contacting an Autarch was an extremely difficult task. All of them were mysterious and hard to locate; most Hegemons were incapable of reaching out to them. The only one who permanently resided in his own estate was Autarch Titanos, who was the easiest one to contact. However, even then the only ones who were able to reach out to him were supremely powerful

figures who were favored by the Autarch due to having rendered great merits in the past! For example, even though Ji Ning had met Autarch Titanos in person, he didn't have any way to reach out to the Autarch.

The Lonely King was extremely strong, but he still wasn't able to contact Autarch Titanos. If he wished to do so, he would have to ask other major powers to send word on his behalf.

Only those who had rendered truly great accomplishments in the past, such as Realmslord Windgrace, Grand Emperor Skydeep, or God Emperor Helong were able to reach the Autarch. But of course, even then they would only reach out to the Autarch's personal disciples! That was equivalent to reaching the Autarch himself.

In the end, there were very, very few people who had rendered great enough deeds that they gained access to an Autarch.

Hegemon Goodsong had to fly for over fifty million years before reaching God Emperor Skydeep's abode! In contrast, the Flamedragon Realmverse was much farther away; it would've taken him billions of years to reach it.

And so, roughly 120 million years after Ning had made his Daomerge attempt, Hegemon Goodsong managed to send word to Realmslord Windgrace via Grand Emperor Skydeep.

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In truth, roughly 90 million years after Ning's Daomerge attempt, word of 'Daolord Darknoth slaying the Lonely King with one strike of the sword' and 'Daolord Darknorth is searching for Nuwa' had already finally made its way to the Bluesky Realmverse, and thus to Nuwa in the Blazesun Domain.

Within the Blazesun Domain.

Rumble... a series of explosions could be heard coming from that distant, blazing star as countless flaming meteors continuously blasted out from its surface.

A silvery-white ship was flying through the void with five figures within

it. All five had extraordinary auras, with the most extraordinary auras belonging to an old man and a young man. The old man had long, fiery red hair, a stooped body, and was dressed in robes made out of fiery leaves. He had a fiery tree branch growing out of his head as well. This was the awesome, legendary Patriarch Treewind.

As for the young man, he looked extraordinarily cold and remote. He was dressed in beautiful robes, and he was known as Emperor Jade Rainbow. He was the only person in this squad who was the equal of Patriarch Treewind. For him to style himself as 'Imperator' rather than merely 'Emperor' was a testament to his arrogance and self-confidence... but right now, his eyes were filled with smoldering rage.

"Our luck has been terrible. We fought for so long and that otherverse was almost in our grasp... but we ended up being ambushed by Palegrace and an entire host of Hegemons. This pisses me off." A furry alien youth let out a low growl, his entire body crackling with fiery power. He was a Hegemon as well.

"Master." A woman was located right next to Patriarch Treewind. She was dressed in unusual green robes which were also covered with leaves, but her leaves were all green. Her master's robes were covered in red leaves. She was incredibly beautiful, and when she smiled anyone who saw her would feel their hearts grow peaceful.

"If we lost, we lost. We ran into that otherverse by accident anyhow," Nuwa said with a laugh. "Besides, an extra otherverse wouldn't make much of a difference to our upcoming explorations."

"Agreed." Patriarch Treewind nodded slowly. "Although it was disappointing and frustrating, to see an otherverse be stolen from right in front of us, Nuwa is right. Brother Jade Rainbow and I already have otherverses, while Nuwa has a Sithe weapon. This otherverse wouldn't have made too much of a difference to us. We've joined forces to enter the Blazesun Domain, and our true goal is the Sithe armory Nuwa spoke of! That otherverse was nothing more than something on the side."

"Forget it." The dazzlingly handsome Emperor Jade Rainbow still had a

cold look on his face as he snorted, “I’ll spare that stupid bitch Palegrace this time. Next time I see her, I’ll teach her a lesson. Nuwa, how far are we from the Sithe armory?”

“When I discovered that Sithe armory, I was still just a World-level cultivator,” Nuwa said. “I was lucky enough to somehow survive, but I only have a vague idea of where it was located. Based on what I know, we should be fairly close to it now.”

Nuwa had appeared in the Blazesun Domain as a World-level cultivator. Back then, she had discovered a Sithe armory but was too weak to fully obtain it. She had barely managed to drag away a single treasure, then had immediately fled. She had nearly died on multiple dangerous occasions before eventually running into Patriarch Treewind, who had taken her on as his disciple. He had led her out of the deadly Blazesun Territory and over to the Bluesky Domain.

Nuwa had never truly understood what the ‘Sithe armory’ she had discovered truly represented. Only when she became a Daolord of the Fourth Step did she understand, but she didn’t dare to make it public. Only when she succeeded in her Daomerge and became a Hegemon did she mention it, electing to invite a large number of Hegemons to join forces and search for those treasures.

“Eh?” Emperor Jade Rainbow suddenly revealed a look of shock as his face actually turned pale.

“What’s wrong, brother Jade Rainbow?” Patriarch Treewind was rather surprised. What could have happened, for the perpetually cold and arrogant Emperor Jade Rainbow to lose control of his emotions like that?

“Something huge just happened.” Emperor Jade Rainbow was no longer as cold and grim as he usually was. Even his voice was rather shaky.

“Something huge?” Nuwa listened with curiosity. She had trained for the shortest period of time out of the five, and she was filled with great admiration towards Emperor Jade Rainbow, who was as strong as her master. Without question, he was an incredible figure.

“Old man Treewind, you know the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army?”

the Emperor asked.

“I know of him.” Patriarch Treewind nodded.

“He’s dead.” Emperor Jade Rainbow said somberly, “He was killed by a single sword-strike from a terrifying person known as Daolord Darknorth.”

“What?!” Patriarch Treewind revealed a look of shock. “How is that possible?”

“Wait, there’s more. I don’t know the full details yet. Give me a moment,” the Emperor said. His Primaltwin was in another extremely distant place, and it was chatting with some other major powers about Daolord Darknorth. Eventually, the Emperor was given the full story... and then he heard that Daolord Darknorth was searching for Nuwa.

“Huh?!” Emperor Jade Rainbow turned to stare at Nuwa in astonishment.

Nuwa blinked, puzzled at the look on the Emperor’s face as he stared at her.

“What’s going on, brother Jade Rainbow? What’s the story behind Daolord Darknorth? The Lonely King used the Ritual Sacrificium to become a Golden Emperor; his body was tougher than even yours, and he was protected by multiple Sithe war machines. Most likely, the only cultivators capable of killing him in one blow are the legendary Autarchs.”

“Daolord Darknorth is very powerful.” Emperor Jade Rainbow stared at Nuwa as he continued to speak: “Based on what my friends have deduced, he has most likely managed to master the Eternal Omega Dao of the Sword! He’s at an unfathomable level of might. The Lonely King died before even being able to react to that single sword-strike from him.”

Patriarch Treewind was stunned upon hearing this.

“Darknorth?” Nuwa had never heard this name before, but for some reason she had the vague feeling that he was connected to her in some way. It was as though some blurry lines of karma were linking them together. Alas, Nuwa’s skill in the Dao of Karma simply wasn’t strong

enough for her to fully investigate every single karmic thread attached to her... but she was still able to at least sense it.

“He’s been publicly acclaimed to be second to only the Autarchs amongst the cultivators of the Chaosverse. He’s so powerful that he can wipe the two of us out with just a wave of his hand.” Emperor Jade Rainbow stared at Nuwa. “And... he’s currently looking for a cultivator named Nuwa.”

“Nuwa?” Patriarch Treewind and the other two Hegemons all turned to look. Now, all four of them were staring at Nuwa.

“He said that Nuwa is an incredibly talented female cultivator who has probably trained for roughly a hundred chaos cycles. He said that she is either a freakishly powerful Daolord or possibly an Eternal Emperor.” Emperor Jade Rainbow stared intently at Nuwa.

“That’s a huge coincidence.” All of them were stunned by this. As for Nuwa herself, she didn’t say anything, but a puzzled look appeared in her eyes.

Chapter 8: One Last Thing

Who was this ‘Daolord Darknorth’? She definitely didn’t know him... but how could he possibly know that she had trained for roughly a hundred chaos cycles? She had encountered many profound encounters; when factoring in temporal acceleration, the actual amount of time she had spent training was far longer than just a hundred chaos cycles. And yet, it was true that she had only spent a hundred chaos cycles of ‘normal’ time in training!

“Daolord Darknorth is incredibly talented,” Emperor Jade Rainbow continued, “And based on what I know, he should have trained for roughly the same length of time as you have, Nuwa! Unfortunately, he failed his Daomerge. He must have immediately mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao after failing the Daomerge. His sword-arts are unequalled throughout the entire Chaosverse. Nuwa, he knows you and has trained for roughly the same length of time as you. Do you know him?”

Nuwa frowned slightly.

“Nuwa,” the nearby Patriarch Treewind asked hurriedly, “Do you know Daolord Darknorth or not?”

“I’ve never heard of him. There’s no way I can be mistaken about this. None of the old friends I used to know were named ‘Darknorth’.” Nuwa slowly shook her head.

“Odd.” Patriarch Treewind was puzzled. “Is it possible that the ‘Nuwa’ he is looking for is someone else?”

“There are countless beings with same names, but the chances are very low that there is a second person who just so happens to be Nuwa who is also incredibly talented and has trained for just a hundred chaos cycles.” Emperor Jade Rainbow was puzzled as well. “Is it possible that this really is just a crazy coincidence? Is there really a second incredibly talented female cultivator named ‘Nuwa’ out there?”

Nuwa pondered silently to herself. She had the strange feeling that the person this ‘Daolord Darknorth’ was searching for was her, even though

they had never met before. “Daolord Darknorth... who is he?” Nuwa mused to herself.

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The Flamedragon Realmverse was indescribably far away from the Blazesun Domain. A white-robed Ji Ning was seated in the lotus position atop a solitary mountain within Vastheaven Palace. In front of him was a table, while the red-robed Su Youji was by his side, pouring his wine.

Ning gulped down one cup of wine after another, a hint of a smile on his lips as he analyzed the boulders placed in front of him. Some were jagged, some were slick, and some had plants growing next to them. There was even a little bug that was clambering up a plant quite slowly, even though it was furiously working its tiny little claws.

“Haha...” Ning watched as the beetle managed to climb atop one of the leaves. Its weight caused the leaf to droop downwards, resulting in the beetle falling back down to the ground again. Ning couldn’t help but laugh when he saw this.

“Master, you seem to be quite happy just watching the bugs.” Su Youji continuously poured wine for Ning.

Ning smiled as he pointed at the bug. “Bugs need to fight for food and mates. Their lives are short, but spectacular. Ordinary mortals might live for a bit longer, but they generally only last a hundred years. I seem to have been sitting here drinking some wine for quite a long period of time.”

“Master, you’ve already been drinking wine here for exactly 32,822 years,” Su Youji said.

“Oh.” Ning laughed. “I’m a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge. All the Eternal Emperors sigh at how short my life will be, but I still have thousands of chaos cycles left. I have far, far more time than those bugs or those ordinary mortals. Hell, ordinary chaosworlds rise and fall within the span of a single chaos cycles. If you look at it from that perspective, I actually have a lot of time left. I wonder, though... will I be able to last long enough to find any word of Nuwa?”

“You definitely will, Master,” Su Youji said hurriedly.

“Mm.” Ning nodded. Ever since he had failed the Daomerge, he had focused his efforts on making preparations for the people he cared about. He had mostly finished his preparations for his disciples; the rest would be up to them. Success or failure, life or death... it would all be based on their own efforts. As the saying goes, the master can show the way, but the student must walk it himself.

Right now, Ning still worried about the Three Realms more than anything else! This was because the Three Realms held his parents, his daughter, his master, his fellow disciples, and many of his good friends. It was also his homeland!

“The final task I have is to find a good protector for the Three Realms.” In the past, he had borne this burden by himself. Alas, he didn’t have much time left. Ning was entrusting all of his hopes to Nuwa.

If he couldn’t find Nuwa, he was entirely capable of forcing a few major powers to swear lifeblood oaths to protect the Three Realms! However, someone who was doing something willingly would be far more effective than someone who was acting out of compulsion. There was a limit to how effective a compulsory lifeblood oath would be; the best solution was for him to find someone who truly cared about the Three Realms and would be willing to sacrifice for it.

Ning trusted Nuwa. She had once been the true leader of the Three Realms, with the Three Sovereigns, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, Daoist Three Purities, and the others all serving by her side. This was a testament to her personal charisma.

Whoosh. Ning could sense a ripple manifesting outside. He turned to stare, his gaze piercing through the dimensional walls and allowing him to see a streak of azure light descending into the emptiness of space outside the Vastheaven Everworld. Realmlord Windgrace had arrived via the Blacksun!

“Daolord Darknorth.” Realmlord Windgrace quickly arrived at Vastheaven Palace. He descended, then walked over to face Ning.

“Sit,” Ning said calmly.

“Daolord Darknorth, we’ve found Nuwa,” Realmslord Windgrace said.

Ning’s eyes instantly shone with utterly dazzling light. The entire world around him seemed to have been bathed in infinite joy, and even Realmslord Windgrace couldn’t help but be caught up by it.

“Where is she?” Ning asked.

“She’s currently in the Blazesun Domain, but she was previously living in a realmverse,” Realmslord Windgrace said. “That realmverse is extremely far away from us. It’s actually fairly close to the Quintessence of the Chaosverse! Its name is the Bluesky Realmverse.”

“It’s fairly close to the Quintessence of the Chaosverse?” Ning was rather surprised. His will was connected to the incomparably distant prime essence of the Dao of the Sword, and thus he knew just how incredibly far away it was.

Realmslord Windgrace nodded. “Oh, right. Nuwa is a Hegemon of the Bluesky Realmverse. She recently succeeded in her Daomerge and gained Hegemony, and is the disciple of Patriarch Treewind. She’s only trained for a hundred chaos cycles, yet has already reached Hegemony; in terms of talent, she is probably second only to you yourself!”

Ning felt even more excited upon hearing this. Nuwa had become a Hegemon after training for just a hundred chaos cycles! This had to be her! And she was a Hegemon? That meant she would be capable of truly protecting the Three Realms. Weaker cultivators weren’t capable of using the Sithe weapons Ning had acquired from the Lonely King.

“Why is she all the way over there?” Ning was puzzled. He immediately asked, “Do you know anything about her?”

“I heard that she first appeared in the Blazesun Domain, all by herself. She experienced many dangers before being discovered by Patriarch Treewind, who accepted her as his disciple. Thus, she’s technically a foreigner and not native to the Bluesky Realmverse,” Realmslord Windgrace said.

“A foreigner?” Ning now felt absolutely certain it was her... and his subconscious was whispering the same. She was Mother Nuwa of the Three Realms!

“You said she is currently in the Blazesun Domain?” Ning frowned. “Why is she in the Blazesun Domain?”

“I heard that she is accompanying Patriarch Treewind and several other major powers in an alliance to explore its depths,” Realmslord Windgrace said. “I heard this information from someone named Hegemon Goodsong.”

Ning frowned. “The Blazesun Domain... that’s one of the Eight Domains next to the place where the prime essences of the Chaosverse are located.”

The prime essences of the Chaosverse were located in a marvelous place known as the Quintessence. You couldn’t simply find them through normal means; not even Hegemons or Otherverse Lords were able to locate them by simple ‘searching’. The Quintessence was the font for all things in spacetime, and it resided in the very core of the Chaosverse itself. Only those who were at a sufficiently high level of enlightenment would be able to find them! Autarchs were able to locate the Quintessence, but Hegemons were not. Ever since Ning had taken control over the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword, he knew that he too would be able to discover the location of the prime essences of the Chaosverse.

The land of the prime essences... the Quintessence was a truly marvelous place, capable of giving birth to Chaos Primordials, Sourcewalkers, and many other living beings.

Chaos Primordials were born as gluttonous wanderers. They would slowly drift away into the vast Chaosverse, making it quite rare for someone to encounter one... but Sourcewalkers were different. They were highly intelligent and thus generally preferred to stay in the general vicinity of the prime essences! The region around the prime essences would be naturally blessed with an incredible density of treasures, and every so often even armories of Sithe weapons left over from the Dawn

War would appear, as well as otherverses.

The eight domains around the Quintessence with the highest concentration of treasures were all incredibly famous. Ning had never been there before, but he had heard of them long ago.

“If Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, and the others have joined forces, they should be able to keep themselves safe,” Realmslord Windgrace said. “According to the legends, those eight domains are incredibly dangerous to us but of no danger at all to the Autarchs. I imagine they should be of no danger to you either, Daolord Darknorth.”

“Agreed.” Ning nodded. “If Nuwa is at the Blazesun Domain, then I’ll go pay it a visit.”

“The Blazesun Domain is far too distant from us. It’ll take you several billion years to get there by realmship,” Realmslord Windgrace said. “Although my Blacksun is able to tear open spacetime tunnels and allows for instantaneous transportation, there’s a limit to what it can do. The farther the tunnel must stretch, the greater a cost must be paid... and at a certain point, it just can’t stretch any farther.”

“I understand.” Ning smiled. “If that wasn’t the case, the Sithe would’ve been able to spread out throughout the Chaosverse without any limitations.”

“If it takes a few billion years, it takes a few billion years. Doesn’t really matter.” Ning was in a superb mood. He had found Nuwa and had discovered that she was a Hegemon! This absolutely delighted Ning. He now had a chance to bring a final resolution to the last thing he was worried about.

Chapter 9: Travelling Together

At the peak of that solitary mountain. Ji Ning and Realmslord Windgrace remained seated facing each other, while Su Youji poured their wine.

“Master,” Su Youji suddenly said.

“Hm?” Ning turned to look at her.

“I’m going to go with you on this trip to the Blazesun Domain,” Su Youji said hurriedly. She knew that since Ning had failed the Daomerge, there was a limit to how much longer his lifespan would be. He might end up in a battle, resulting in his lifespan depleting even more quickly. She wanted to accompany Ning in his final days for as long as she could.

Ning hesitated for a moment. He knew what Su Youji was thinking. In the end, he nodded: “Very well. However, you need to stay with me and listen to my orders.”

Su Youji immediately smiled radiantly. “Alright.”

“Daolord Darknorth, shall I use the Blacksun to help speed you on the first part of your journey?” Realmslord Windgrace was rather hesitant.

“If you poured in all the treasures you own, how far would you be able to send me via the Blacksun?” Ning said with a laugh.

“Tearing through space consumes an enormous amount of energy! The Hiddenfiend Realmverse is fairly close to the Flamedragon Realmverse, which makes things easy for me. But if I did that a few hundred times, I’d completely use up all of my treasures,” Realmslord Windgrace said.

Ning was surprised: “A few hundred times? Not bad! You live up to your reputation, Realmslord Windgrace. I didn’t realize you had that much treasure.”

“I probably don’t have as much as you, Daolord Darknorth,” Realmslord Windgrace said with a laugh. “The Lonely King plundered his way through the Chaosverse. He had many foes, but he also had many more treasures than I do.”

Ning admitted to it. The Lonely King had an entire army pillaging on his behalf, and had killed three Otherverse Lords. He had also acquired a complete Sithe armory... and now, all of it belonged to Ning.

“In other words, even if you used up all your treasures on the Blacksun, it’d only save me less than a hundred million years of flight time via realmship.” Ning shook his head. “This trip to the Blazesun Domain will take billions of years. Saving a bit of time won’t be of much use.”

His lifespan was limited, but it was still calculated in chaos cycles. ‘Short’ was relative to the lifespans of Eternal Emperors and Daolords!

“Thank you, Daolord Darknorth,” Realmslord Windgrace said gratefully. He couldn’t help but feel rather nervous before Ning, who was capable of killing him with ease. He previously had designs on Ning’s Flamewing God, after all!

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The next day, Ning led Flamewing, Hegemon Azurefiend, Protector Whitethaw, and Su Youji in boarding his realmship and departing from the Flamedragon Realmverse. They were heading off to the distant Blazesun Domain.

Within the endless Great Dark. Hegemon Azurefiend was helping to steer the realmship. There were two ways to ensure that a realmship could continue to proceed at incredible speeds. The first was to use chaos jewels to replenish it’s power; the second was to have a Hegemonic figure use his Immortal energy to keep it activated! This journey would last billions of years, and they’d be travelling every day. It would be quite hard to come up with enough chaos jewels to meet the consumption need.

Hegemons, however, could constantly replenish their Immortal ki and were completely capable of restoring it at a rate which surpassed what the realmship used up.

“Thank goodness we have Azurefiend.” Ning stood there, staring into the endless Great Dark.

“Haha.” Azurefiend squeezed an exaggerated smile onto his withered,

gnarly old face. “It is my honor and my blessing to be able to serve the almighty Daolord Darknorth. Other Hegemons would beg for this opportunity on their knees, to no avail. O, almighty Daolord Darknorth, if you were willing to give me just a few pointers, I would benefit endlessly from your wisdom.”

“Knock it off,” Ning said with a light groan.

“Heh heh heh,” Azurefiend snickered.

“Your smile looks ugly as all hell,” Flamewing said, casting a sidelong glance at Azurefiend while eating.

Azurefiend’s old face tightened as he pointed at Flamewing: “You glutton, it’s none of your business if I wish to flatter my master!”

“What’s that?” Flamewing glared at him. “Azurefiend, you wanna go outside the ship and have a little sparring competition?”

“I’m just kidding with you!” Azurefiend immediately shifted tacts and smiled ingratiatingly at Flamewing. By now, everyone had known each other for quite some time. At the beginning, Azurefiend would never have dared to jest with Flamewing like this. By now, they were just teasing each other. Everyone understood everyone else.

Su Youji smiled as she watched from nearby. As for Whitethaw, he stood by Ning’s side with that honest look on his face as always.

“Enough. I’ll give you some guidance on our way over. Focus on controlling the realmship,” Ning said. His mastery over the Eternal Omega Sword Dao had allowed him to reach a brand new level. All other Daos instantly seemed so much simpler to Ning! Ning’s insights into the other Daos were continually increasing. He didn’t have to train like crazy; all he had to do was spend the occasional period of time in meditation, and he would begin to skyrocket in his understanding of those Daos.

It must be remembered that Autarch Bolin, as a Hegemon, had to spend an extremely long period of time before managing to upgrade all those other Daos to the Hegemonic level. Ning was now far more powerful than Autarch Bolin had been as a Hegemon, and it could be said that there was

now only a small difference in insight between himself and the Autarchs.

The Autarchs were born off the principle of ‘One Dao Births Many Daos’. Ning, in contrast, was a pure ruler of the Dao of the Sword. In terms of the Sword Dao, he was the absolute number one expert in all the Chaosverse. Given enough time, it wouldn’t be too hard for him to reach Hegemony in the Dao of Water, the Dao of Lightning, the Dao of Formations, and his other Daos. Alas, there was a limit to how long he would be alive for and thus there was no way he could study the other Daos as he pleased.

“Don’t worry, Master,” Azurefiend chortled. By now, he also addressed Ning as ‘Master’, and even he didn’t notice the change. Ning was simply so powerful that Azurefiend no longer felt the slightest bit of pride when facing Ning. All he felt was a sense of submission. By now, there were probably many Hegemons who would be willing to serve him. A casual bit of tutelage from Ning would represent an enormous karmic blessing for those Hegemons.

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Time flowed on. More than 3.9 billion years went past in the blink of an eye. Ning had acquired a detailed star map from the treasures he had taken from the deceased Lonely King, and he had also gotten another star map from Realmslord Windgrace. Although it was impossible for anyone to fully map out the entire Chaosverse, he now had fairly complete records on most of the places cultivators had visited.

On this journey, Ning had continuously used the Dao of Numerancy to divine the most appropriate paths forward, as well as the safest route through some places with distorted spacetime. This allowed them to easily pass through even the most dangerous of environments.

“Master! Master!” Azurefiend said hurriedly, “The Squaremix Realmverse is up ahead. That’s the place Hegemon Goodsong asked to meet with us. He should be in the ‘Grand Void Canyon’ of the Squaremix Realmverse.”

“Hegemon Goodsong?” Ning nodded slowly. “He informed me of Nuwa’s location. I owe him a debt and should go repay it.”

“Hmph. I’m sure he wouldn’t dare to ask for too much,” Azurefiend said with a cold snort.

“If he does, I’ll eat him!” Flamewing called out, his mouth covered with grease.

“Enough, you two. Pipe down,” Ning said. “Let’s go meet Hegemon Goodsong.”

Swoosh. Just a short while later, the realmship arrived in the ‘Grand Void Canyon’ of the Squaremix Realmverse. This was a very unique place with distorted spacetime that came together in layers, forming an enormous spatial canyon that could be seen with the naked eye. The depths of the canyon led to another mysterious realm that was filled with tremendous danger. This was a place that had been created during the Dawn War, and the depths of the canyon were filled with many relics. However, by now Ning didn’t care about such relics or legacies.

“Here they come.” A bald, red-robed man was standing directly above the Grand Void Canyon, scanning the area anxiously. Moments later, a spacetime rift appeared and a realmship came sailing out of it. The red-robed man was overjoyed and immediately flew over to welcome them.

Several figures came flying out of the realmship. The leader was a white-robed youth who had a black sheath on his back. Others could dimly sense that his truesoul was slowly but surely fragmenting apart, generating unique ripples as the fragments disappeared into the void. Next to him was the furry Sithe Protector Whitethaw, as well as a peerlessly beautiful woman. There was also a skinny, shriveled old man and a fatty who was holding onto a haunch of meat.

The fatty was Flamewing. It was a born glutton who was capable of devouring entire realmverses with ease. It truly did have a terrifying appetite... and it suddenly glanced sideways at the bald, red-robed man.

“Eek!” The red-robed man instantly quivered as his subconscious screamed to him that he was in terrible danger. He knew that the fat man was the legendary Chaos Primordial which Daolord Darknorth had tamed, a creature which could kill Hegemons like him with ease.

However, Hegemon Goodsong also knew that the most terrifying member of this team wasn't the Chaos Primordial. Rather, it was the harmless-looking white-robed youth standing in front of him.

"Goodsong greets you, Daolord Darknorth." Hegemon Goodsong bowed respectfully, not daring to show the slightest bit of disrespect.

"I have to thank you, Hegemon Goodsong. Thanks to you, I finally know where Nuwa is. If I didn't find her, I would probably harbor regrets until the day of my death." Ning smiled. "I promised long ago that I would owe a favor to the first person to help me locate her. What do you wish of me, Hegemon Goodsong? I'll do anything I'm capable of doing."

Chapter 10: Request

Hegemon Goodsong instantly began to grow nervous. The moment of truth had come! He had spared no expense and even hired a realmship, all for the sake of this favor! If Daolord Darknorth hadn't been willing to offer anything at all, it wouldn't matter how strong he was; no one would've been willing to work so hard for him!

However, Hegemon Goodsong couldn't help but feel nervous. He was worried that his request would be too excessive and anger Daolord Darknorth.

In the end, a favor was just that; a favor. If Hegemon Goodsong asked Ji Ning to do something that would result in Ning's truesoul crumbling even faster, Ning would probably refuse immediately. Thus, there was a limit to what he could ask for. Hegemon Goodsong himself was rather nervous, but he had long ago decided on what he needed. He felt certain that Daolord Darknorth wouldn't attack him.

"Daolord Darknorth," Hegemon Goodsong said respectfully, "I reached the level of Hegemony long ago, longer than even I can remember. I have many friends, and a good number have become Otherverses Lords! But I remain a mere Hegemon, unable to improve in power."

Ning continued to listen.

"Daolord, as you know, we are quite close to the Eight Domains. Although Hegemons are quite powerful, there are also many people here who are stronger than Hegemons," Hegemon Goodsong said sadly.

Ning had to agree. This was a place that was completely unlike the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance he resided in. The Eight Domains... they were closer to the prime essences of the realmverse than any other place. Aside from the prime essences themselves, which were almost impossible to find, the Eight Domains represented the most central region of the entire Chaosverse! It was filled with countless treasures and experts, which was why the major powers of neighboring realmverses would often go exploring and adventuring within them. Many major powers had died

in the Eight Domains, but some would successfully acquire the treasures they sought.

Every so often, an otherverse would appear within the Eight Domains, as would Sithe weapons and other things. Even Nuwa, who had merely been at the World level, had somehow reached the Blazesun Domain from the Three Realms, then stumbled across a Sithe weapon there. The Blazesun Domain was one of the Eight Domains, and it truly was a special place.

In comparison, the Flamedragon Realmverse was extremely far away from the prime essences. It could be viewed as something of a peripheral backwater, a place where very few Otherverse Lords resided. It was simply too far away from the core!

“So what are you asking for exactly?” Ning said.

Hegemon Goodsong gritted his teeth. “Daolord, I wish to increase my power to the Otherverse Lord level!”

“Hah! You actually dared to make a request like this?” The nearby Hegemon Azurefiend let out a cold snicker. “Generally speaking, there are three ways in which one can reach the Otherverse Lord level of power via external methods. The first is to take control of an otherverse! However, the appearance of every single otherverse will result in a frenzied struggle and competition that is far more cruel than you can imagine. The second is to obtain a ‘Golden Emperor form’ and to use it via the Ritual Sacrificium to become a Golden Emperor... but do you know how rare and valuable those things are? Even the Lonely King chose to transform himself into a Golden Emperor. Who the hell are you and why do you think you deserve one?”

“The final method is to acquire extremely powerful Sithe weapons that can let you unleash the power of an Otherverse Lord. Some Sithe weapons are strong, some are weak. A Sithe weapon that will increase your power to the Otherverse Lord level is probably going to be just as valuable as a Golden Emperor form!”

Ning frowned as well. Could he accomplish this? He could! The Lonely King had a total of six extremely powerful Sithe weapons, but he himself

normally only used three of them. The most valuable of the six was the silver throne, which could create illusory doppelgangers and allow one to flee by warping through spacetime. It could also build up power to unleash an attack that was so terrifying it could destroy an entire otherverse.

The other Sithe weapons were a bit weaker, but they were still enough to raise a Hegemon to the Otherverse Lord level of power... but Ning was planning to give them to Nuwa and the Three Realms.

“I’m a cultivator. My only goal is to increase my personal power as much as I can. Aside from this, there truly is nothing else that I need.” Hegemon Goodsong looked at Ning.

Ning was silent for a long moment, then said: “Otherverses are blessings that can only be hoped for, not counted on. I can’t just find one for you! Sithe weapons... although I have some, I already have plans for them. As for Golden Emperor forms, I don’t have any.” The Lonely King had long ago used up all of the Golden Emperor forms he had acquired.

“Daolord Darknorth, you might not have one... but someone nearby known as Divine Sovereign Goldsun does,” Hegemon Goodsong suddenly said.

“Divine Sovereign Goldsun?” Ning frowned.

“Are you asking my master to go and get it from him?” Azurefiend stared.

“If Daolord Darknorth went to ask for a Golden Emperor form, I imagine Divine Sovereign Goldsun wouldn’t dare to decline,” Hegemon Goodsong said.

Ning began to ponder on this. Although the star map which Realmslord Windgrace had provided Ning was fairly incomplete, it did record information about the supreme powers of various regions.

The Sixteen Realmverses Alliance was something of a backwater, but the area around the Eight Domains could be considered part of the core of the Chaosverse. Experts were incredibly common here, and the people who

were able to become local rulers were all extraordinary. Divine Sovereign Goldsun was someone who was unquestionably as powerful as the Lonely King. If the Lonely King could be described as a madman, then Divine Sovereign Goldsun was like an emperor who had unified this entire region under his rule.

Divine Sovereign Goldsun controlled a total of eight nearby realmverses. He himself was an Otherverse Lord, and he also had acquired Sithe armories in the past! He had once bestowed two Golden Emperor forms to his subordinate Hegemons, and had promised that anyone who had rendered great merits would be given one as well.

“You are quite daring,” Ning said. “But aren’t you afraid that Divine Sovereign Goldsun would come for you later?”

“No.” A frenzied look appeared in Hegemon Goodsong’s eyes. “Once I become a Golden Emperor, it’ll be very hard for anyone to kill me. I have no kith or kin who can be used against me, and I’ll be far more powerful than I was in the past. What do I have to fear?”

“Very well.” Ning nodded. “I owe you a favor. I’ll go pay Divine Sovereign Goldsun a visit.” As Ning saw it, visiting the Divine Sovereign might end up being a good thing.

“Let me lead the way!” Hegemon Goodsong was delighted. It was incredibly difficult for a Hegemon to increase another level in power. For the sake of becoming more powerful, many Hegemons would be willing to risk their lives. Alas, very few would have a chance like this. Hegemon Goodsong had successfully grasped his!

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It took them more than five million years to fly from the Squaremix Realmverse to the Goldsun Realmverse, the central region of Divine Sovereign Goldsun’s rule.

Whoosh. Before them was an enormous flaming star that was emanating endless amounts of heat and light. The surface of this fiery star was actually covered with many beautiful palaces. This was the Goldsun Palace of Divine Sovereign Goldsun, and there were more than ten

Hegemons who resided here! There were also two Golden Emperors and sixteen Black Emperors.

“This flaming star is actually a marvelous Sithe weapon as well,” the white-robed Ning evaluated as he stared at the star. They had used the realmship to warp through spacetime and come to this place. “The formations covering this entire cluster of palaces is quite abstruse and profound. It won’t be easy to attack this place.”

“But it would be nothing for you, Daolord Darknorth,” Hegemon Goodsong flattered.

“Come, let us go meet with Divine Sovereign Goldsun. I’m quite curious about him.” Ning had a rather favorable impression of Divine Sovereign Goldsun, as the man was truly committed to the Dao. He clearly had access to Golden Emperor forms, but he didn’t undergo the Ritual Sacrificium; from this, one could see that he was still committed to attempting to become an Autarch.

Whoosh. Ning immediately flew out towards the surface of the fiery star with Su Youji, Whitethaw, and the others by his side. Right as they landed...

“Halt!” A loud shout rang out, followed by an onyx humanoid flying over in a fierce manner. When he saw Ning’s group, he barked, “This place is the Goldsun Palace. Trespass is not permitted!” As a guard of the Goldsun Palace, he had long ago grown accustomed to behaving arrogantly in carrying out his duties.

“Hmph.” Flamewing let out a cold snort. Its aura flared malevolently, causing the guard to instantly feel a terrifying sense of danger.

“Send word to Divine Sovereign Goldsun. Tell him that Daolord Darknorth has come to visit him.” Ning smiled.

“Daolord Darknorth has come to visit him?” The guard stared blankly for a moment. In the next moment, his face turned completely ashen. When he thought of the many rumors swirling around this man, his voice began to quiver as he said respectfully, “Please wait a moment, Daolord Darknorth. I’ll go send word right now.”

Ning nodded, and the guard instantly flew off.

“Master, why are you so courteous to him? Just fly right on in. I’d like to see what Divine Sovereign Goldsun would do about it!” Hegemon Azurefiend said.

“I already have an overwhelming advantage in power. There’s no need to use it to bully others.” Ning shook his head.

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Within the Goldsun Palace. Divine Sovereign Goldsun was being waited upon by two female attendants. He held a jade slip in his hands and was viewing and meditating upon it.

“Divine Sovereign! Divine Sovereign!” A frantic cry came from outside as the Black Emperor guard came rushing into the room.

“Hrm?” A hint of annoyance could be seen in Divine Sovereign Goldsun’s eyes as he glanced at the guard. The Divine Sovereign was someone who cared tremendously about propriety and status. He naturally felt rather irritated that this guard actually dared to barge into his private meditation room.

“Divine Sovereign, Daolord Darknorth has arrived!” the guard called out frantically.

Divine Sovereign Goldsun snapped, “And so what if Daolord Da-... eh? Did you say Daolord Darknorth?” His face instantly turned ashen, and his heart began to quiver. He naturally didn’t feel the slightest bit of pride or arrogance when faced with someone who could slay him with ease. In fact, he felt a hint of terror. Why had Daolord Darknorth suddenly come to visit him without any preamble? Could it be that Daolord Darknorth had come to kill him and take his treasures?

“Where is he?” Divine Sovereign Goldsun could feel that his heart was shaking.

“He’s right outside the palace gates,” the guard said.

Chapter 11: Houwu City

“You WHAT? You actually had Daolord Darknorth wait outside the palace gates?” Divine Sovereign Goldsun instantly cast the guard a furious glare as he hurriedly rose to his feet. Swoosh! He instantly disappeared without a trace.

Ji Ning, Su Youji, Whitethaw, the Flamewing God, Azurefiend, and Hegemon Goodsong were all waiting outside the gates to the Goldsun Palace.

Swish! A figure suddenly appeared out of nowhere. It was the beautifully dressed Divine Sovereign Goldsun. His face was now covered with smiles. As soon as he saw Ning, he could immediately sense that this Daolord whose truesoul was slowly splintering apart had to be the legendary Daolord Darknorth! This was because Divine Sovereign Goldsun could sense that unique aura emanating from this white-robed youth, an aura that was profounder than profound.

This aura actually had a whiff of the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword itself. Ning wasn't trying to hide his aura, but even so ordinary Hegemons would not be capable of detecting it. Divine Sovereign Goldsun was focused on becoming an Autarch and had trained for many years. He had reached an extremely high level of power and had gained tremendous insight into many different Daos. As a result, his senses were even more acute than the likes of God Emperor Helong.

“Goldsun greets you, Daolord Darknorth.” Divine Sovereign Goldsun instantly bowed respectfully, then said with a smile, “I never would've imagined that you'd come to visit me. I'm absolutely overwhelmed and delighted.”

“I've come here because there's something I need to trouble you about, Divine Sovereign,” Ning said.

“Please come in first. We can discuss it shortly,” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said hurriedly. “If there's anything I can help you out with, I'll do everything I can. Daolord Darknorth, please come in.”

Ning followed him inside. Su Youji and Whitethaw followed from behind, with Flamewing, Azurefiend, and Hegemon Goodsong bringing up the rear. Hegemon Goodsong felt particularly delighted, while Flamewing gave Divine Sovereign Goldsun a provocative stare.

“What a savage, bloodthirsty aura! It is probably just as strong as I am. This should be that legendary Chaos Primordial.” Divine Sovereign Goldsun glanced at Flamewing as well, but continued to warmly guide Ning deeper into his estate.

He had long ago ordered for his subordinates to prepare a banquet. A feast had been laid out at the main hall of the Goldsun Palace, with many servants and maids all waiting to serve them.

Ning and Goldsun sat down in the lotus position in the highest seats. Divine Sovereign Goldsun intentionally set his table slightly lower than Ning’s.

“I’ve heard of your illustrious name long ago, Daolord Darknorth. I’ve always admired you, but I live too far away from the Flamedragon Realmverse. I’ve regretted being unable to visit you, but today you’ve overwhelmed me with delight by coming to visit my Goldsun Palace instead.” Divine Sovereign Goldsun smiled. “Come, come! Let us share a few toasts first. I wish to celebrate your visit to my palace.”

The other major powers of Goldsun Palace all raised their cups in unison as well. Ning smiled and lifted his own cup, downing it on the spot.

“Mm. Fine wine,” Ning couldn’t help but speak out in praise. When he drank the wine, he felt as though a ball of fire was going all the way down his throat into his belly. The tremendous heat instantly filled his entire body to the point where he felt it was going to burst out of his skin. Moments later, a cool and refreshing feeling spread out from his stomach and encompassed his entire body. This alternating process of heat and cool resulted in him feeling as though his body had just undergone a baptism of sorts, almost as though it had been transformed and remade.

“This is a special product of the Goldsun Palace, the ‘Triflame Jewel Brew’. I have quite a bit of it stockpiled away in my palace. If you like it,

Daolord, you can take some with you and enjoy it in the future as well,” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said with a laugh. He knew very well that he had to be extremely careful when dealing with someone like Daolord Darknorth, who now stood at the very apex of power in the cultivator civilizations... and who had failed his Daomerge! The slightest bit of discourtesy could result in irreversible repercussions.

Ning smiled and said, “Then I’ll accept some. Divine Sovereign Goldsun, I’ve come because there is something I need to bother you about.”

“Pray tell, Daolord,” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said hurriedly. The entire room turned silent, with Hegemon Goodsong listening the most attentively.

Ning waved his hand, causing a storage bracelet to appear. He handed it over and said, “I wish to use some of the treasures within this estate-world to trade for a Golden Emperor form from you, Divine Ruler.” Ning had quite a few treasures by now. He had looted the Jadenfire Realm clean and had stripped the Lonely King of all his treasures. Ning had left behind the ones he thought would be of great use to the Three Realms, then chose some other rare materials that were of limited use to him right now. There were around ten or so which, all combined, were more or less equal in value to a Golden Emperor form.

“Is that it? A Golden Emperor form? Daolord, for you to visit me in person and show such courtesy shows that you hold me in esteem. How could I possibly be so stingy as to hold back a Golden Emperor form from you?” Divine Sovereign Goldsun waved his hand as he spoke, causing a head-sized ball of golden liquid to immediately fly out. This golden liquid was shaped like a perfect globe, and it was covered by a layer of continuously flowing light. It seemed quite mysterious.

“As for your treasures, Daolord, I don’t need them.” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said hurriedly, “This Golden Emperor form is my gift to you, Daolord.”

He was able to bestow these things to even his subordinates. To him, a Golden Emperor form actually wasn’t all that valuable. He cared far more

about the Sithe weapons he used to keep himself safe. He actually felt relieved that Daolord Darknorth had merely asked for a Golden Emperor form; the loss wouldn't have any impact on his own personal power.

Ning waved his hand to accept the golden globe of liquid, then smiled: "Go ahead and take it." The storage bracelet continued to hover in front of Divine Sovereign Goldsun.

"Umm..." Divine Sovereign Goldsun hesitated for a moment, then said, "Daolord Darknorth, there really isn't any need for you to give me the treasures inside this bracelet. I have cultivated for many years and have many treasures; a few more really won't make any difference to me. But... Daolord Darknorth, would you be willing to perhaps give me some guidance?"

The Dao was not to be casually transmitted to others. Divine Sovereign Goldsun didn't dare to ask Ning to actually transmit the Eternal Omega Sword Dao to him; all he asked for was some guidance.

Ning nodded. "Very well. I'll give you three days worth of guidance in order to repay you."

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Within a vast hallway, Divine Sovereign Goldsun manifested a pair of wings and wielded a semi-translucent saber in each of his two hands. The sabers were as thin as the wings of a cicada.

Ning stood off in the distance, facing him. A single streak of sword-light manifested in the air between them. This sword-light was generated from the external manifestation of the aura of the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword. Unless absolutely necessary, Ning wouldn't use any of his own divine power or Immortal energy.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Sword-light danced in a ghostly, dream-like manner, almost like moonlight playing across the darkness. Divine Sovereign Goldsun fought with tremendous savagery and in an extraordinarily dominating style, but faced with Ning's sword-arts his stances became filled with countless flaws. Each time, Ning was able to break apart his attacks with ease.

Whoosh. The sword-light came to a halt right in front of Divine Sovereign Goldsun's forehead, causing him to awkwardly halt his attacks.

"I lost again." Divine Sovereign Goldsun shook his head and sighed. "I always thought that my saber-arts were impressive. I've never suffered such catastrophic losses after becoming a Hegemon."

He had been completely outclassed in a battle of technique! Autarchs could do this as well, but Autarchs couldn't be bothered to guide him. Generally speaking, they would only provide a bit of guidance to figures who they liked AND who had rendered great merits.

By now, there were countless Hegemons who deeply desired to be given a bit of guidance by the peerless Daolord who had mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, but this required luck and karma. Divine Sovereign Goldsun had decisively rejected any treasures and instead asked for guidance from Ning.

"These past three days have been more helpful to me than the past ten million chaos cycles of solitary training. I now realize that my saber-arts are actually flawed in many ways." Divine Sovereign Goldsun said gratefully, "Thank you, Daolord Darknorth."

"Since the three days have come to an end, it is time for me to leave," Ning said.

After spending three days with Ning, Divine Sovereign Goldsun no longer felt as much fear as he had in the past. He now had the feeling that Ning was quite easy-going. He said warmly, "Daolord Darknorth... dare I ask, have you come here from the distant Flamedragon Realmverse because you are searching for Nuwa?"

"Yes." Ning didn't deny it. Word of his search for Nuwa had long ago spread to countless places.

"If you wish to find Nuwa, I should be able to help out a bit," Divine Sovereign Goldsun said with a laugh.

"You can help out?" Ning was surprised.

"Daolord Darknorth, you are probably aware that Nuwa is currently

accompanying her master, Patriarch Treewind, and other major powers in a journey through the Blazesun Domain,” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said. “But... you probably don’t know that Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, and the others are currently within the city of Houwu in the Blazesun Domain.”

Ning’s eyes lit up when he heard this. The city of Houwu? The Blazesun Domain was enormous; it would actually be quite tricky to locate Nuwa within it. He had been planning to first locate Nuwa and Patriarch Treewind’s avatars, then find them in person.

“Haha, I have a bit of a reputation in the area around the Blazesun Domain,” Divine Sovereign Goldsun said with a laugh. “I’m kept quite up to date with news in this area, and I’m good friends with Lord Houwu. All I need to do is send word to Lord Houwu and ask him to inform Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa and have them wait for you in Houwu City! That way, you can just meet them there and save yourself some trouble.”

Chapter 12: Blazesun Domain

“They are currently at Houwu City?” Ji Ning was delighted. This really would make things much simpler.

“I received this information just a short while ago. Usually, cultivators will spend an extended period of time resting at Houwu City once they reach it. Let me reach out to Lord Houwu once more.” Divine Sovereign Goldsun immediately sent out his godsense to contact with one of his subordinates: “Help me immediately contact Lord Houwu and ask if Nuwa and Patriarch Treewind are still at Houwu City. If they are there, I would like to ask Lord Houwu to keep them here! Tell them that Daolord Darknorth will be arriving in around twenty million years and wishes to meet Nuwa.”

“Yes, Divine Sovereign.” This Hegemon servant of his had a Primaltwin in the distant city of Houwu.

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Houwu City. Within the Blazesun Domain.

Houwu City was an enormous levitating city that saw several estates sprinkled throughout the city. Very few cultivators came here; generally speaking, only Eternal Emperors would ever dare to come here.

“Haha...” Loud laughter rang out, followed by a green-robed elder and two retainers flying into the skies above an estate.

“Brother Treewind! Brother Jade Rainbow!” the green-robed elder called out loudly, his voice shaking the entire estate. Soon, a total of five figures came flying out from within the estate, including Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and Nuwa.

“Lord Governor, why have you come to our residence? If there’s anything you need from us, all you needed to do was send word.” Patriarch Treewind and the others were all quite courteous, and they hurriedly moved to welcome their guest.

The green-robed elder chortled as he turned his gaze towards Nuwa: “I

come on important business, after all. This must be Nuwa?”

Nuwa said, “Nuwa greets you, Lord Governor.”

“Impressive, truly impressive. You were able to complete the Daomerge and reach Hegemony in just a hundred chaos cycles,” the green-robed elder praised. “No wonder Daolord Darknorth has come to seek you out.”

“You praise me too much. I made use of temporal acceleration treasures when I trained. My actual amount of time spent cultivating was far more than a hundred chaos cycles,” Nuwa said with a smile.

“Mm.” The green-robed elder said, “I’ve come to help Daolord Darknorth send you a message.”

“Help Daolord Darknorth send a message?” Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, and Emperor Jade Rainbow were all stunned.

“Daolord Darknorth has sent word to me via Divine Sovereign Goldsun. He hopes that you will remain at Houwu City, because he’ll be arriving soon. Daolord Darknorth shall be descending upon Houwu City in person in twenty million years to meet with you, Nuwa.” The green-robed elder looked at Nuwa and smiled. “Nuwa, congratulations. Countless Hegemons and Emperors desperately desire to have a chance to meet with Daolord Darknorth, but never will. For you, however, Daolord Darknorth has flown all the way here from the incredibly distant Flamedragon Realmverse. It seems that he views you as being incredibly important! Haha, even I can’t help but envy you, Nuwa. If I need to ask for your help in the future, I hope you won’t refuse me.”

“I’ll do everything in my power to assist you.” Nuwa was rather puzzled. “I’m embarrassed to admit this, but... I don’t believe Daolord Darknorth and I know each other.”

“Haha, if you don’t know each other, why would he go to such great lengths to meet with you? I imagine you’ll know who he is once he actually arrives.” The green-robed elder continued, “Alright, I’ve already conveyed his message. Just wait for him here in Houwu City; you’ll only need to pause for a few tens of millions of years! Also... please don’t make things difficult for me. Since Daolord Darknorth asked for me to keep you

here, I wouldn't dare to let you leave."

"Don't worry. We'll wait at Houwu City for Daolord Darknorth," Emperor Jade Rainbow said immediately.

"Good!" Lord Houwu smiled and nodded. "I'm off, then." Patriarch Treeind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and Nuwa all watched as Lord Houwu left.

"It seems we have to stay here for a time," Patriarch Treewind said with a chuckle. "If we tried to leave, Lord Houwu would probably trap us here by force."

"Hmph." Emperor Jade Rainbow smiled coldly. "Lord Houwu has always been an arrogant and overbearing bully. He only spoke to us with courtesy for the sake of Daolord Darknorth. He wouldn't dare to refuse to convey Daolord Darknorth's message."

"We were planning to hide in Houwu City for a time anyhow," Patriarch Treewind said. "Let's make use of this opportunity to meet with the legendary Daolord Darknorth. Nuwa, when that happens I might need to ask you to say a few words on my behalf."

Nuwa said self-deprecatingly, "I still have no clue who this Daolord Darknorth really is."

"Don't be impatient. A mere twenty million years will go by like nothing. You'll know soon enough," Emperor Jade Rainbow said.

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Time flowed on. Ning's team left the Goldsun Palace and began to advance through the endless Great Dark. After a total of over twenty million years, they finally reached the Blazesun Domain.

Whooosh. Endless flames were flying through this entire region, as were blazing rocks. In front of them was an incredibly vast and dazzling realmverse which was filled with planets and stars that all looked like giant balls of fire.

"The Eight Domains." Hegemon Goodsong was dressed in red robes, and

his entire body gleamed like gold. He smiled and immediately began to introduce the place: “In the vast Chaosverse, there are many sacred places which are formed by the convergence of certain types of energy! This place is the closest region to the Quintessence of the Chaosverse, and it is divided into eight incredibly marvelous domains. The Blazesun Domain is filled with the power of countless flames.

Ning nodded while the nearby Azurefiend said, “The ‘Icewind Sea’ we visited in the past was a place which was formed from a convergence of freezing energy that was roughly comparable to a territory in size! The Blazesun Domain, however, is unfathomably vaster in size and scope than the Icewind Sea. It is one of the Eight Domains, the most supreme of sacred lands, and it is comparable in size to more than half of a realmverse.”

The Icewind Sea was an ‘ordinary’ sacred land, while the Eight Domains were the most supreme sacred lands of the entire Chaosverse. All sorts of unique living beings had gathered here, including Sourcewalkers, the occasional Chaos Primordials, and more.

“Daolord,” Hegemon Goodsong said warmly, “There are two ways for us to travel into Houwu City. The first way is fairly safe; it involves us avoiding many dangerous locations, and it’ll take us tens of millions of years to get there. The other method is to just blaze our way straight through. We might run into quite a great deal of danger in doing so, but we’ll only need five hundred thousand years or so.”

“We’ll go straight through,” Ning said.

“Right on!” Hegemon Goodsong continued hurriedly, “We might encounter some danger when going straight through, but I should be able to resolve any dangers myself. If we encounter something really serious, we can then have the Flamewing God intervene as well. There should be no need for you to personally intervene, Daolord.”

“Alright.” Ning nodded. Goodsong was now a Golden Emperor; between him and the Flamewing God, the vast majority of dangers could be easily resolved.

Whoosh. The realmship flew straight into the Blazesun Domain, charging towards Houwu City at maximum speed.

The Blazesun Domain was a place where an incredibly vast amount of flaming energy congregated. Its vast size actually gave it superior stability, resulting in it being a world unto itself. It was filled with fire, but there are also places with earth, water, stone, and more. There were many empty pockets of space where the temperature was a bit higher than in 'normal' realmverses, but Celestial Immortals and Empyrean Gods would still be able to survive.

The more stable a region was, the more hospitable for life it would generally be.

But of course, the Blazesun Domain also had some incredibly dangerous places within it, places which were far deadlier than the Icewind Sea. The Icewind Sea merely had two Sourcewalkers in it; the Blazesun Domain had far more! However, they were scattered throughout the entire domain, making chances of running into them quite low.

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Whoosh. A dark-red river could be seen surging through the emptiness of space, stretching off into infinity. This dark-red river had to be many millions of kilometers long, and it emanated an aura of endless heat. Every so often, a few serpentine beings could be seen swimming through the river.

“Gwaaaaaar!” A long black serpent lifted its head and half of its enormous body above the surface of the river, focusing its flaming gaze on Ning’s realmship, which was advancing through the region at high speeds. Its eyes were filled with malevolence, and it raised its serpentine head high as it let out an earth-shaking roar.

The roar actually generated a ripple of power that caused space around it to twist and distort. Instantly, additional giant blackflame serpents lifted their heads up as well. Cultivators were actually trespassing here? They were courting death!

The environment here was extremely inhospitable to ordinary life. There

was no way to warp through spacetime here, and so Ning's group had to physically fly through this region. If they wanted to avoid it, they would have to take a detour that would last millions of years.

"Blackflame River has dozens of these giant blackflame serpents living within it. All of them are unique creatures born from the Quintessence of the Chaosverse, but only three of them have reached the Otherverse Lord level of power. Most of the others are Hegemons; they are of little danger," Hegemon Goodsong immediately explained. "Once Flamewing appears, they'll be so terrified that they won't dare to move."

"Mm." Ning said, "Flamewing, go out with Goodsong and give these little black snakes a good scare."

"Heh heh heh... they look delicious, actually." Flamewing immediately flew out of the realmship, letting out an excited howl as it transformed into its true form. Bathed in flames, the Flamewing God flapped its giant wings and immediately swooped down towards the nearest blackflame serpent. Clearly, Flamewing enjoyed being in the fiery environment of the Blazesun Domain. Being here excited it, and as a result it moved with such incredible speeds that the giant blackflame serpent was terrified. Its malevolent aura vanished and it immediately moved to flee... but how could it possibly escape?

Chapter 13: They Finally Meet

Crunch! The Flamewing God's giant maw came crunching down upon the blackflame serpent. As Flamewing began to chew, the blackflame serpent's writhing body suddenly began to erupt with flames. Soon, it became burnt to ash.

This sight completely terrified the other blackflame serpents in the flaming river.

"Chaos Primordial, hurry up and leave our territory!" an exceptionally large blackflame serpent roared furiously, but it didn't step forward. It knew that perhaps the only members of the race who would survive a fight against Flamewing would be him and the other two leaders. The others were completely incapable of battling against a Chaos Primordial. If an actual battle erupted, they would simply be throwing their lives away.

"Grrr..." Flamewing let out a loud and smug growl.

"Impressive. If I tried to go up by myself, I'd definitely be surrounded by them," Hegemon Goodsong said enviously. Flamewing had a virtually indestructible body and possessed incredible speed; surrounding it was useless. Most likely, only Sithe Exalts would be able to effectively surround and threaten it.

"Let's leave." Seeing this, Ning knew that the blackflame serpents would no longer try to bar their path.

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With Hegemon Goodsong and the Flamewing God clearing a path for them, their journey was simple and uneventful. Ning didn't need to intervene a single time.

They did encounter several unique and bizarre types of lifeforms, all of whom were birthed from within the Quintessence of the Chaosverse! The most powerful creatures birthed from the prime essences were the Chaos Primordials and the Sourcewalkers, but both were incredibly rare. Chaos Primordials were born with immense power, while Sourcewalkers were a

bit weaker but had incredible powers of insight and thus had more room to grow.

The other creatures born from the prime essences were blessed with far less power than the Chaos Primordials and far weaker levels of insight than the Sourcewalkers. They were much more numerous, but on the whole the Sourcewalkers remained the most powerful creatures birthed from the prime essences! This was because the most powerful Sourcewalkers were actually comparable to Sithe Exalts in terms of power.

For example, the Blazesun Domain had one of these supreme Sourcewalkers within it who was comparable to Sithe Exalts in power! But of course, he was the only one in the entire domain who had reached such a level of power.

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520,000 years went past in the blink of an eye.

“Master, Houwu City is up ahead,” Azurefiend called out as he controlled the realmship.

“Houwu City?” Ning stared at it from afar. This was a city covered in countless mysterious runes that levitated within the emptiness of space. It rippled with formations, and it was surrounded by numerous levitating continents as well.

“Daolord Darknorth,” Hegemon Goodsong said quickly, “We cultivators only have this single city in the entire Blazesun Domain! This is a place where we can hide and rest while we are adventuring through this region. The entire city itself is actually a powerful Sithe war-fort and it is capable of easily defending against any dangers, so long as the Ruler of the Blazesun Domain doesn’t come and attack in person.”

“The Ruler of the Blazesun Domain?” Su Youji couldn’t help but ask, “Who is that?”

“Youji,” Ning smiled as he explained, “The term ‘Ruler of the Blazesun Domain’ refers to the most terrifying Sourcewalker located in the Blazesun Domain. The legends say that he is as powerful as a Sithe Exalt.

His overwhelming power means that he is honored with the title of 'Ruler of the Blazesun Domain'. However, in the end he's still just a Sourcewalker; he won't get involved in the affairs of the cultivator civilizations."

"Right. So long as you don't offend the Blazesun Ruler, he won't make trouble for us either," Hegemon Goodsong said. "After all... we have the invincible Autarchs on our side! As a result, the supreme Sourcewalkers don't dare to go too far. Even if he does become so crazy as to assault the city of Houwu, the city should be able to hold on for a while albeit at great cost. Given enough time, most of the cultivators should be able to flee."

As they spoke, the realmship continued to move towards the levitating city at high speeds.

"Halt!" a loud shout rang out. The city's entrance was guarded by a golem guard.

"Hurry up and send word," Hegemon Goodsong barked back, "That Daolord Darknorth has arrived!"

"Daolord Darknorth?" The golem guard was shocked. "I'll send word to Master right away."

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The entire city of Houwu was in a state of uproar. News spread quite quickly amongst cultivators, and just a few seconds later the news that Daolord Darknorth had arrived at the city was known by a majority of the cultivators here. The Hegemons and Eternal Emperors, as well as the few fearless Samsara Daolords who had chosen to adventure in the Blazesun Domain, all came flying out to see what the legendary Daolord Darknorth looked like.

"Daolord Darknorth has arrived?"

"Where is he?"

"Look over there! Daolord Darknorth is flying within the realmship above the city." More and more cultivators came pouring out from every direction, and they all hastened to stare at the main gates in front of the

city.

“Quick! Quick! Brother Treewind, Brother Jade Rainbow, Nuwa... all of you, hurry over here and accompany me in meeting with Daolord Darknorth!” Lord Houwu was the most impatient of them all. Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa had been meditating silently, but they were immediately startled awake and hurriedly came running over.

“Hurry up and go welcome them!”

“Daolord Darknorth has arrived?”

Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and Nuwa all grew nervous right away, with Nuwa being the most nervous of them all. Daolord Darknorth had come all the way here from the distant Flamedragon Realmverse for the sake of meeting her!

The green-robed Lord Houwu was the first to fly into the skies, with Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, Nuwa, and the others all following by his side. The cultivators around the gates all parted before them, not daring to bar their path.

Lord Houwu was at the head of the delegation. Behind him was Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa, and at the very rear were the other Hegemons and Emperors. They exited the city gates in an awesome procession. Houwu City, as a war-fort, was covered with barrier spells. Generally speaking the barriers would remain sealed, preventing people from simply flying out.

Above the city hovered that realmship.

“I am the Governor of Houwu City, and I respectfully welcome Daolord Darknorth!” The green-robed Lord Houwu immediately bowed respectfully, his face covered with joy. His Daoist title was ‘Houwu’, and so he had named this war-fort after himself after acquiring it.

“We respectfully welcome Daolord Darknorth!” The surrounding Golden Emperors, Otherverse Lords, Hegemons, Eternal Emperors, and Samsara Daolords all bowed respectfully as well.

Faced with the legendary Daolord Darknorth, these major powers were

as nervous as Ning himself had been when he had first met Autarch Titanos. The difference in power was simply too great! Even the most powerful person here would probably be slain by a single blow from Ning's sword. How could any of them dare to show the slightest bit of incivility towards him?

"Who is this Daolord Darknorth?" Nuwa was standing behind Lord Houwu. She stared into the skies, her heart filled with curiosity.

"No need to stand on ceremony." A wave of power surged out, pressing against Nuwa's arms and preventing her from bowing down.

For the others to show Ning such respect was one thing, but Nuwa was different. Ning felt a sense of tremendous respect for Mother Nuwa. Perhaps he was now much stronger than her, but Patriarch Subhuti was his master. Mother Nuwa had shown great favor to Patriarch Subhuti in the past, and indeed had done great things for the entire Three Realms. How could he possibly allow Nuwa to bow towards him?

"This aura..." Nuwa was secretly startled. In fact, all of the cultivators were shocked. For his aura alone to be so powerful meant that Daolord Darknorth lived up to his reputation.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Three additional figures came flying out from the realmship. The first was the chubby Flamewing, the second was the red-robed Hegemon Goodsong, and the third was Hegemon Azurefiend. After flying out, they stood slightly behind the white-robed youth who bore the black sheath on his back. In addition, Ning was flanked by the simple, muscular Protector Whitethaw and the dazzlingly beautiful Su Youji.

This white-robed youth had appeared with his entire entourage. His aura wasn't all that powerful, and his truesoul was slowly fragmenting and dissipating. If he was an ordinary Daolord who had failed his Daomerge, these major powers wouldn't care about him at all... but he wasn't. This white-robed youth caused all of them to feel nervous and breathless due to the great difference in power between them!

"Lord Houwu, sorry for the trouble." Ning stepped forward, landing on

the ground and smiling.

“It was nothing more than conveying a message. It was my honor to be able to serve you, Daolord Darknorth,” Lord Houwu chortled. A thought came to his mind, and he hurriedly turned to glance at the nearby Nuwa: “Daolord Darknorth, this is Nuwa.”

Ning’s gaze turned towards Nuwa as well. In truth, he already knew for certain that she was the person he sought, as there was no way to fake the karma ties between them. When he saw her just now, he felt absolutely convinced... because he was very familiar with her appearance. He had spent his entire youth visualizing the [Nuwa Painting], which was a depiction of Nuwa. How could he NOT be familiar with her?

The woman before him was the legendary Mother Nuwa of the Three Realms.

Ning stared at Nuwa, and she stared at him as well, her heart filled with many questions. She had the vague feeling that there had to be some sort of connection between them, but she simply couldn’t remember ever having met this Daolord Darknorth before.

“Darknorth greets you, Nuwa.” Ning smiled.

Nuwa was startled. For the legendary Daolord Darknorth to speak so courteously to her had caught her offguard.

Ning chuckled, and as he did a voice suddenly rang out within Nuwa’s mind: “Pangu established Heaven and Earth, while Nuwa repaired the heavens!”

Chapter 14: Transmitting the Dao

Nuwa instantly trembled. She stared with disbelief at the white-robed youth standing before her.

“H-he...” Waves of emotion rippled through Nuwa’s heart. She instantly understood that Daolord Darknorth knew of her past! Either he came from the Three Realms or he knew of its history; in short, Daolord Darknorth definitely knew where the Three Realms was located! Nuwa had been searching for many years to return to the Three Realms, but she still had no idea where it was located!

Which realmverse was the Three Realms in? She had no idea! She spent a great deal of time searching, but the Bluesky Domain was simply too far away from the Flamedragon Realmverse. Even a trip via realmship would take billions of years; even Otherverse Lords and other major powers would rarely drift to such a great distance. Such a journey would entail many dangers, after all, and they could easily get lost or even die. Unless there was an extremely compelling reason, few would venture to such a great distance.

“Haha, it seems as though this Nuwa before us must be the person you are searching for, Daolord Darknorth.” Lord Houwu immediately laughed and said, “To be able to meet at last after being separated by such a great distance is a joyful thing indeed. There’s no need for us to speak here outside the city; let’s hurry on inside! I’ve already prepared a fairly humble banquet to welcome you, Daolord Darknorth. I hope you’ll show me a bit of face and sit down for a time.”

Ning nodded. “Very well.” Since he had found Nuwa, there was no need for him to rush into a conversation with her right in front of the gates.

“You...” Nuwa stared at Ning, her heart filled with both excitement and confusion.

“We can chat at length later. You have many things to say to me, and I have much to say to you,” Ning said.

“Disciple, let’s invite Daolord Darknorth into the city first. There’ll be

plenty of time to chat with him later.” Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow both behaved with great friendliness as well.

“Understood.” Nuwa was able to make herself be patient.

Led by Lord Houwu and surrounded by many major powers, Ning entered Houwu City and travelled to the Lord Governor’s estate. The palace had already prepared a banquet for them, with the maids quickly assembling and making themselves up in order to welcome Daolord Darknorth.

“Please come in, Daolord Darknorth.” Lord Houwu immediately led Ning to the highest seat.

Ning didn’t decline, walking up and sitting down in the lotus position. He smiled: “Gentlemen, please be seated.”

“Nuwa, you can sit over here.” Lord Houwu spoke with great friendliness, arranging for Nuwa to in the first seat located directly to Ning’s left. As for Lord Houwu himself, he sat in the first seat to Ning’s right.

It must be remembered that multiple Otherverse Lords were present. Lord Houwu himself was an Otherverse Lord; for him as the Lord Governor to be seated second only to Ning was one thing, but for Nuwa to be seated similarly? Some of the major powers present couldn’t help but mumble to themselves, “Lord Houwu truly is going out of his way to curry favor with Daolord Darknorth.” These major powers were all treating Ning the same way they would treat an Autarch... and in truth, many of them had never even met an Autarch in all their lives!

Ning was close to an Autarch in terms of insight, and he had failed his Daomerge. It was guaranteed that his life would be a brief one, and so they wanted to seize this chance to befriend him. If they missed this chance, they would probably never get a second one. Some simple pointers from Ning would probably be more effective than countless chaos cycles of training on their own. Most of them had been trapped at the Hegemon level for many years without making any improvements at all.

“My friends, you have all come here to welcome Daolord Darknorth.”

Lord Houwu's face was all smiles as he spoke: "As a result, Houwu City has also been given a chance to host a truly rare banquet. To be able to meet with Daolord Darknorth is our good fortune. If it wasn't for the fact that he was searching for Nuwa, we would probably never have a chance like this. Let us first offer a toast to Daolord Darknorth in honor of the karma which brought us together."

"A toast to the Daolord!" Instantly, all of the major powers lifted up their cups.

Patriarch Treewind and Imperator Jade Rainbow were considered ordinary powers here. Only those who were at least at the Hegemon level of power were seated, while the weaker ones weren't even permitted to take part. But of course, Daolord Darknorth's retainer Su Youji was able to take part. She was even seated close to the front.

Ning lifted up his own wine cup, downing the wine before replying with a smile, "No need to be so courteous. Everyone, be more relaxed and casual. This is my first visit to the Blazesun Domain, which is filled with countless dangers, many strange lifeforms, and Sourcewalkers of incredible power. It isn't easy for cultivators to stay alive here, and I've long heard that the one and only city which we cultivators have here is the city of Houwu. This place is a place where we cultivators can rest and be sheltered, and now that I'm here I can tell that it truly is extraordinary."

"It is nothing more than a resting stop," Lord Houwu said humbly. "In the end, we're still the weaker party here. Everyone still acknowledges that the Blazesun Ruler is still that Sourcewalker."

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The major powers all chatted in high spirits during this banquet, telling Daolord Darknorth of all the marvels they had encountered within the Blazesun Domain. Ning was quite curious as well; although he had heard of some of the Blazesun Domain's secrets from Hegemon Goodsong and Realmslord Windgrace, he still knew very little. As he listened to one secret after another, he began to gain a clear understanding of just how marvelous the Blazesun Domain was. As the major powers continued to

converse, they all gradually began to grow more familiar with each other as well.

“What?! A Sithe Exalt is trapped here?” Ning said in shock.

“Just so.” Lord Houwu laughed, “The Blazesun Domain does indeed have a Sithe Exalt imprisoned within it. An Autarch captured him during the Dawn War and sent him into the Blazesun Domain, where he has suffered all sorts of torment ever since.”

“Not just the Blazesun Domain; five of the other seven domains all have a Sithe Exalt within them!” Next to Lord Houwu was a silver-browed old man who held a fan in his hands, and he said with a smile, “A total of six Sithe Exalts have been trapped in the Eight Domains. All of them were captured during the war and have been tormented ever since.”

“Oh?” Ning truly was surprised by this. He had heard long ago from Emperor Waveshift that there were Sithe Exalts trapped somewhere, but he never would’ve imagined that six of the Eight Domains each had a Sithe Exalt imprisoned within them!

“Do you know why the Autarchs captured them instead of killing them?” Ning asked, puzzled.

“No idea.”

“The Autarchs must have their own plans.”

“However, the Sithe Exalts truly are being constantly tortured. They suffer a fate worse than death and constantly let out miserable bellows,” the major powers reported.

Ning nodded slowly when he heard this.

“Daolord, if you wish to pay a visit, when you are free I’ll lead you there myself,” Hegemon Goodsong said. “Although I’ve never visited myself, I know where it is.”

“Very well.” Ning did indeed wish to pay a visit. He had the feeling that there had to be a profound reason behind the Autarchs imprisoning the Sithe Exalts here. In fact... why didn’t the Autarchs imprison them within

their own estates rather than in the Eight Domains?

“Perhaps I’ll know once I visit them,” Ning mused. The other major powers weren’t able to see through the secrets behind the Sithe Exalts, but Ning was at a much higher level of insight than them. Perhaps he would be able to see through to the truth that they could not.

Ning glanced at the nearby Nuwa. This entire time, Nuwa didn’t seem to really care for the food she was eating. This entire time, she was trying to guess just who Ning was. Ning laughed, then said in a loud voice, “I think we should call it a day.”

Lord Houwu was caught offguard. He hurriedly rose to his feet and said, “Daolord, there’s one thing I would like to ask of you.”

“Pray tell, Lord Governor,” Ning said.

“I’ve heard long ago that your Dao of the Sword is unfathomably profound and abstruse, Daolord,” Lord Houwu said. “I, Houwu, am focused on cultivation. I go out adventuring and brave many dangers, all for the sake of finding new insights. I wasn’t able to become much more powerful, but I did find this city! To me, however... what I truly desire is to be able to walk farther along the path of the Dao. I’ve always wished to become apprenticed to an Autarch, but never had the chance. Now that you are before me, Daolord, how could I give up a chance like this?”

As Lord Houwu spoke, he immediately knelt down and kowtowed towards Ning, then said respectfully, “Houwu is willing to follow you, Daolord, and obey your orders. I only beg that you are willing to transmit the Dao unto me and let me see a vaster, more profound Dao.”

“Transmit the Dao?” Everyone in the hall fell silent. All of the major powers turned to stare at Lord Houwu in a rather unhappy manner.

If Lord Houwu had merely asked for Ning to provide him with some guidance, that would be fine. It was a bit much for him to curry favor with Ning in order to gain from it, but Ning would’ve been alright with that. The problem was, Lord Houwu had actually requested that Ning ‘transmit the Dao’ to him!

What did 'transmit the Dao' mean? It meant for Ning to actually transmit his full Dao to Lord Houwu in its entirety!

Divine Sovereign Goldsun had given Ning a Golden Emperor body, and even then Ning had only given him three days of guidance without actually transmitting his Eternal Omega Sword Dao to him. This was the only Eternal Omega Dao which had ever existed in the entire Chaosverse; its value was truly incalculable! Daoist Bluestone had paid an enormous price just to view the Daolord-level Omega Sword Dao... and now, Ning had upgraded it to become an Eternal Omega Sword Dao! How was it that Lord Houwu even dared to make a request like this?

Ning sat there on his seat, staring down at the kowtowing Lord Houwu. His gaze grew cold. "And why the hell should I transmit my Dao to you?"

Chapter 15: Private Talks

“And why the hell should I transmit my Dao to you?” Ji Ning’s icy voice continued to echo within the silent hall.

The atmosphere within the entire hall seemed to have frozen over. The other major powers were secretly speechless at how rash Lord Houwu was behaving! Although Daolord Darknorth was supposedly an amiable person, he was still a figure of terrifying power who could wipe them out with ease. How could someone behave so impetuously before a person like him?

None of the major powers here would dare to do such a thing. Only someone who was as crazy as Lord Houwu would!

Lord Houwu continued to kneel there on the ground, his heart shaking. He was rather afraid as well! He was afraid that Daolord Darknorth would kill him... but he still chose to take this action. By his very nature, he was a risk-taker. That was why he had established a city for cultivators within the Blazesun Domain!

The entire Blazesun Domain only had a single city in it. Logically speaking, someone who had acquired a Sithe war-fort would put it within his own citadel or realmverse; that was normal and made sense. Lord Houwu, however, had insisted on putting it within the Blazesun Domain instead. This was a testament to his personality and the type of person he was; he dared to do the things which others did not!

As Lord Houwu saw it, even if he failed in his request, the warm way in which he had welcomed Daolord Darknorth should at least ensure that he wouldn’t be killed out of hand.

Lord Houwu knelt there, suppressing his terror as he spoke, “Daolord, I haven’t been able to improve in the Dao despite the passage of countless years. I simply cannot accept this. Now that you have appeared, I finally see hope. I am willing to give up everything for this opportunity.”

“Give up everything?” Ning’s face had been icy cold, but now a hint of a smile played across the corner of his lips. The kneeling Lord Houwu,

however, was unable to see it. “Very well. Give me your city and all of your treasures, including your Universe treasures. Only then would I accept you... and even then, I’ll only teach you whenever I’m in the mood. Do you accept?”

Lord Houwu was stunned. He was to give up everything? He had risked his life countless times to acquire his treasures, to have the foundation and fortitude needed to establish a city here in the Blazesun Domain. Without his Sithe treasures, he would merely be an ordinary figure amongst the other major powers. Lord Houwu’s body felt limp and weak. Was he really able to give up all of these things?

He was not! Even if he did acquire the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, he wouldn’t necessarily be able to improve all that much. He would, however, lose all of his Sithe treasures. He simply couldn’t accept this.

“Clearly, you aren’t able to ‘give up everything’.” Ning calmly rose to his feet, then began to walk towards a side room. “There’s no need for any of you to follow.” As he spoke he nodded towards Nuwa, who immediately moved to enter the side room with him.

Only after Ning left did sound return to the hall.

“Whew.”

“Brother Houwu, you truly are bold. I’d never dare to act as you just did.” Some other major powers walked over, while Lord Houwu rose to his feet.

“You dummy.” The only person in the hall who was still eating was the Flamewing God, and it raised his head to glance at Lord Houwu.

“Dummy?” Lord Houwu looked back at Flamewing.

“I know exactly what type of person my master is. There’s no way he’d take advantage over one of his students like that! If you really said that you were willing to offer everything to Master and obey him in all things, I can guarantee that there’s no way he’d actually take your crappy treasures.” Flamewing snickered as it shook its head. “A pity. You missed your chance, and you won’t get another one.”

“Ah?!” A look of regret and sorrow appeared on Lord Houwu’s face. Alas,

he wasn't really familiar with the type of person Daolord Darknorth was, and he truly wasn't able to give up all of those treasures.

Most importantly of all, when Ning spoke he had infused his voice with a sort of natural illusion which ensured that Lord Houwu would be completely focused on this choice. If he truly was determined in pursuing the Dao at any cost, Ning probably would've nodded and accepted him. However, he had failed the test. This was proof that his Dao-heart was insufficiently resilient.

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Within the side hall. Only two people were here; the first was Ning, while the second was Nuwa.

"Sit. We can speak at length now." Ning felt rather emotional as he stared at the woman before him.

Nuwa... she was a legend to the Three Realms. But of course, Ning himself was now a legend of the Three Realms as well. Back when he was very young and weak, his first step on the path of cultivation had been him visualizing the [Nuwa Diagram]. Now, the two most dazzling cultivators of the Three Realms had come together in the Blazesun Domain, a place which was incomparably distant from the Three Realms. Destiny truly was a marvelous, unfathomable thing.

"Daolord Darknorth, can you tell me where the Three Realms is located?" Nuwa asked the question which she wanted to ask above all others. Cultivators were blessed with long lives, but spending all that time without even knowing where home was located was a source of pain and torment.

If she had been born a Chaos Primordial, a creature who was born into solitude and lonely wanderings, that would've been one thing... but she had been born into the Pangu Chaosworld and then lived in the Three Realms. She had fought for that place, and that was where all of her friends were.

"The Three Realms is located in the Flamedragon Realmverse," Ning said.

“So it really is there!” Nuwa nodded. “When I heard that you came from the Flamedragon Realmverse, Daolord Darknorth, and that you were searching for me, I immediately began to suspect that the Three Realms might be located there. However, the Flamedragon Realmverse is extremely far away from the Blazesun Domain. When I left the Three Realms, I encountered a spatial tempest within that dimensional corridor and ended up being lost. I appeared here within the Blazesun Domain. I never would’ve dared to imagine that I had drifted so far from home.”

Ning was rather surprised: “Really? So you really did lose your way within the dimensional passageway and end up arriving in the Blazesun Domain?” It took billions of years when travelling by realmship to cross such a great distance. How could she have ended up in such a distant place just because she was ‘lost’? This was crazy.

“Yes.” Nuwa nodded. “Back then, I was merely a World-level cultivator. How could I, all by myself, have travelled from the Three Realms to the Blazesun Domain?”

“The Blazesun Domain...” Ning was intrigued. “Actually, on this journey to the Blazesun Domain I had the vague feeling that this place is truly quite extraordinary. Now that you tell me that you came here from the Three Realms after being lost in space... the secrets within the Blazesun Domain are most likely even greater than I suspected.”

“Secrets?” Nuwa was curious.

“If I can discover them, I’ll let you know,” Ning laughed. “I’ve failed my Daomerge, after all. That means I’m going to die. There’s no need for me to hold anything back from you.” Ning had already decided that Nuwa would be the one to protect the Three Realms on his behalf.

“Daolord Darknorth... can you tell me who you are, exactly?” Nuwa couldn’t help but ask, “Why is it that you know of me?”

“Haha...” Ning laughed. “My master is Patriarch Subhuti of the Tristar Crescent Abode of Mount Innerheart.”

“Subhuti?!” Nuwa was stunned. “Y-you are Subhuti’s disciple?!”

“Yes.” Ning nodded.

“I n-never would’ve imagined that you...” Nuwa had a complex look on her face. She remembered those years, those battles she had experienced alongside those lifelong friends. Back then, none of them had any guidance from the outside world at all. They had to blindly find their own paths for cultivation. Pangu had perished after establishing Heaven and Earth, and so Nuwa had become the leader of the group.

“Subhuti, Three Purities, Tathagata, Suiren... are they doing well?” Nuwa asked.

Ning blinked, then shook his head. “My master Subhuti is still alive, but Daoist Three Purities, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, Suiren, Shennong, Fuxi, as well as many of the other Immortals and Fiendgods of the Three Realms have perished, as have Keeper Everwood and Daomother Devilhand of the Seamless Gate.”

“What?!” Nuwa was stunned. She had been born from the primordial chaos itself. To her, those ancient Fiendgods were her family, her kith and kin who she had fought alongside. How was it that they had all died?

“There were two instigators behind their deaths. The first was Patriarch Demonheart,” Ning said, “While the other was Old Man Yuan.” Ning immediately narrated the tale of what had happened during that era.

Nuwa was surprised to hear that the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms, Daofather Fujū, had actually been World God Northrest. She was enraged to hear of what the Seamless Gate did! She felt regret that she hadn’t slain Patriarch Demonheart, while she felt pain over Houyi’s death. Most of all, she felt incredible sorrow when she heard of how many of her old friends in the Three Realms had chosen to perish via self-detonation in an attempt to take out Old Man Yuan. Tears began to fill her eyes.

“Alas.” Nuwa let out a gentle sigh.

“That battle truly was a calamitous one,” Ning said softly. “I simply hadn’t been training long enough back then. In truth, I’ve always been hoping to be able to revive them all in the future as well... but when they

self-detonated, their souls and truesouls were shattered. To bring them back to life is far, far too difficult.”

Ning didn't go into detail as to why. If even a Celestial Immortal like Yu Wei was very difficult to revive, Three Purities and the others would be nearly impossible to bring back. All of them had been incredible figures who had been blessed with the essence of Autarch Awakener's godgems. How incredibly hard would it be to revive them?!

“In the end, I failed my Daomerge. I failed by just a thread.” Ning shook his head. “Ever since I failed the Daomerge, I've been wanting to find news of you. I could sense that you were still alive! I'm going to die, and the one thing I cannot help but worry about is the Three Realms. I wish to find a protector for the Three Realms, but I just cannot trust anyone else with it. But if you, Nuwa, were present... I wouldn't feel nearly as worried as I do currently.”

As Ning spoke, he waved his hand. A series of treasures appeared before them, with the most important one being a jade slip. This jade slip emanated a terrifying aura of power even though it simply levitated there in the air, and its aura was so strong that Nuwa could barely breathe.

Chapter 16: Soldiers Descend on Houwu City

A total of four treasures were hovering in front Ji Ning. The first was a silver throne, the second was a set of beautiful silver robes, , the third was a blood-colored diamond, while the fourth was a jade slip. The first three were the Sithe weapons which the Lonely King had often used.

“These three Sithe weapons, I acquired after I slew the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army,” Ning said with a laugh. “The silver robes are protective in nature, while the blood-colored gemstone can instantly unleash attacks of incredible power which are so fast that even Otherverse Lords might perish if caught off-guard! In fact, there truly have been Otherverse Lords who have perished to the Lonely King as a result of this gemstone. The silver throne, however, is the most important treasure. It allows one to warp through space, create multiple illusory clones, and even launch attacks. At full power, its attacks can destroy an entire otherverse.”

Nuwa was shocked upon hearing this. These three treasures truly were extraordinary! If all three were used together, even most Otherverse Lords would feel a sense of fear. The Lonely King had relied upon them more than anything else.

“Starting today, these three Sithe treasures shall belong to you.” Ning looked at Nuwa.

“I can’t accept this,” Nuwa rejected instinctively. Although they had adventured to a Sithe armory and she had acquired a treasure, any of the treasures which the Lonely King had used to dominate the Chaosverse was vastly superior to hers.

“Don’t decline. I’ve failed the Daomerge and won’t use energy without a good reason,” Ning said. “And... a casual blow from me would be more powerful than these treasures by far. In the Three Realms, my master Subhuti and the others are incapable of using these treasures. The only person in the Three Realms who can use them is you, Nuwa! With these treasures, you’ll be strong enough to protect the Three Realms. Accept

them.”

Nuwa wasn't the wishy-washy type. She immediately nodded: “Very well. I'll accept them. The Three Realms is my home; of course I'll protect it!”

Ning smiled. “As for this slip, it contains my Eternal Omega Sword Dao. I've recorded it all here, and no one has ever viewed it before.” Ning chuckled. “Take a look and see if it can give you a few new ideas.”

“Eternal Omega Sword Dao?” Nuwa stared at the levitating jade slip. Its aura continued to cause her to feel a sense of shock. She knew that compared to the first three treasures, the jade slip was the most valuable treasure of them all!

“Thank you.” Nuwa didn't decline, nor could she decline. She reached out to gently touch the jade slip, then instantly sent out her godsense.

A flood of information entered her mind. The first thing Nuwa did was to swear a lifeblood oath that she could only allow members of the Three Realms to study the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. But of course, if she herself was able to glean certain insights from the Eternal Omega Sword Dao she wouldn't be limited in her ability to transmit them to others.

“This Sword Dao...” Nuwa was stunned when she sensed how vast and overwhelmingly powerful the Eternal Omega Sword Dao was.

“Accept the jade slip. You can view it and ruminate on it as you please,” Ning said. The Eternal Omega Sword Dao was simply far too profound; not even a direct transmission into one's mind could allow one to brute-force memorize it all! If you read through it quickly, you'd soon begin to forget it all. Your memories would grow blurry... because this was something which vastly surpassed your ability to understand it! You had to have the jade slip by your side and constantly meditate on it and study it. As a result, the jade slip itself was incredibly important. This was why Ning had requested that Nuwa only allow the members of the Three Realms to be trained in it.

“Alright.” Nuwa accepted the jade slip, then sat down in the lotus position and began to meditate on it. She was completely consumed by it, completely intoxicated by this truly grand Dao. As for Ning, he sat down

next to her as well.

“Darknorth, this sword-art seemed to have its own spirit. Why is it that it is so marvelous and agile?” Nuwa raised her head and asked, her fingers demonstrating as she spoke.

Ning began to demonstrate his sword-arts while answering each of her questions. Ning held nothing back from Nuwa at all, because once he died and his Dao vanished, Nuwa would become the most powerful expert of the Three Realms.

Ning had been able to vaguely scry parts of the future. He was able to see that Nuwa would indeed continue to safeguard the Three Realms and that she was definitely worthy of his trust. But of course, there were many other images that had appeared as he scryed the future. In the end, the future was in a state of flux. Since it had yet to actually happen, all things were technically possible.

In the blink of an eye, Ning had spent more than half a year guiding Nuwa as she trained. Nuwa was completely absorbed with training in the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, and for Ning to personally instruct her and resolve her questions was a truly rare opportunity. Ning wouldn't even be this detailed when teaching his own students! As for Lord Houwu or Patriarch Treewind, none of them dared to disturb the two.

Rumble... a terrifying wave of power suddenly spread out into the city from afar. Ning frowned and rose to his feet. He walked over to the entrance to take a look towards the distant horizons. He could sense that a vague, malevolent aura was surging towards them from afar.

“What's going on?” Nuwa rose to her feet and walked over to the entrance as well. “Something feels wrong.”

“I can sense that a force is drawing near,” Ning said. “And it is quite strong. Let's go take a look.” Ning and Nuwa flew out side-by-side. In truth, figures were flying out from residences throughout Houwu City. These Hegemons, Emperors, and Samsara Daolords could all sense the increasingly powerful ripples generated by the encroaching power.

“Master.” Flamewing, Su Youji, Whitethaw, Azurefiend, and Hegemon

Goodsong all immediately flew towards Ning.

“Daolord.” Lord Houwu flew out as well, behaving as warmly as before.

“Lord Governor,” Ning asked, “What’s going on?”

Lord Houwu hesitated slightly. Suddenly, a figure appeared at the horizons. This was something who had four hooved legs but the upper body of a human. This strange creature was as crimson as blood, and it galloped through the skies. These creatures were wielding all sorts of weapons, including greataxes or heavy warhammers. They all radiated auras of tremendous power.

“Crimson bloodfiends?” Lord Houwu growled, “Over a hundred crimson bloodfiends have appeared at the same time?”

Rumble... the hundred-plus crimson bloodfiends galloped towards them. Moments later, towering eight-armed giants whose bodies were as white as snow suddenly began to appear as well. The many eight-armed giants each had just a single eye, and they let out furious roars as their awesome auras spread out as well.

These were all unique lifeforms... but what truly surprised Ning was that all the members of these two races had reached the Hegemon level.

“These are incredibly powerful races... and for the two to appear at the same time?”

Ning was surprised. “Lord Houwu, does this happen often here?”

“No. We rarely see such powerful beings.” Lord Houwu was puzzled as well.

Suddenly, the two races of creatures split apart into two sides, revealing three figures in their midst.

To the left was a towering crimson bloodfiend whose entire body was covered with golden armor. The fiend wielded a double-edged battleaxe which was covered with runes and emanated a shocking aura of power; clearly, this was a very unique Sithe weapon.

To the right was an eight-armed giant who was holding a set of fiery

chains. Most of the fiery chains were wrapped around him, and his aura was just as terrifying as the fiend's.

Finally, there was a red-robed maiden in the center.

The faces of quite a few cultivators turned gray when they saw these three appear. "Them?!" Lord Houwu's face tightened as well. "Where did they come from?"

Ning frowned as well. Although he didn't know who these three people were, he could roughly estimate how strong they were. The three leaders... two were unique lifeforms, while the other was a Sourcewalker. All three of them were extremely strong, significantly stronger than most Otherverse Lords.

The red-robed maiden stepped forward to stand in front of her allies. She said: "All cultivators of Houwu City, hear my commands!" Her voice was ice cold and it shook every part of the region.

"I have come on orders from the Ruler of the Blazesun Domain. I have come to Houwu City to capture five cultivators." The red-robed maiden waved her hand as she spoke, causing a scroll to instantly unfurl and reveal a total of five images. These were images of Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, Nuwa, and the other two. In the images, Patriarch Treewind and the others were advancing carefully.

"Same rules as always." The red-robed maiden actually glanced at Patriarch Treewind, then at Nuwa who stood behind Ning. "Hand the five of them over and we won't harm anyone else. If you dare to refuse... then that means Houwu City shall enter yet another war against us!"

A total of more than two hundred Hegemonic creatures were hovering in the air behind the three leaders. The pressure they brought upon the cultivators was quite enormous... and they were backed by the even more powerful Blazesun Ruler. This was a threat which another type of civilization was levying against the cultivators... and here in the Eight Domains, the cultivator civilizations were clearly the weaker party.

"Walker Scarletbind," Lord Houwu called out loudly, "Can you tell us how they have offended the Blazesun Ruler?" The Blazesun Ruler was one

of the most supreme of Sourcewalkers, comparable to Sithe Exalts in power. So long as an Autarch didn't intervene, these creatures were invincible.

"Hmph. These five thieves actually dared to barge into one of the Ruler's hidden residences. They caused an enormous amount of damage and wiped the place clean. They even destroyed one of the Ruler's favorite treasures, the Jadeheart Lamp! The Ruler was infuriated by this, and so he sent the order to capture them and bring them back. They are to be tortured to death! Otherwise, there's no way he can give vent to his rage," the red-robed maiden said angrily.

Chapter 17: Battle Erupts

Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, Nuwa, and the others all turned pale.

“A fine disciple you have, Treewind!” Emperor Jade Rainbow instantly sent a frantic mental message: “A ‘Sithe armory’? It was actually one of the Blazesun Ruler’s hidden estates. We’re in serious trouble now!”

“What’s the use of saying all of this now? When we broke through layers of formations and penetrated to the very depths of the estate, we already suspected that this was actually a place which belonged to the Blazesun Ruler, right? You still chose to take the Sithe treasures away with you. The entire reason we chose to hide within Houwu City was because we wanted to see what would happen next!” Patriarch Treewind said angrily.

“Damn it.” Emperor Jade Rainbow was extremely nervous. He glanced at the white-robed youth standing next to Lord Houwu, then sent mentally, “Old man Treewind, do you think Daolord Darknorth would be willing to help us out? And... do you think he can beat the Blazesun Ruler?”

“Hard to say,” Patriarch Treewind sent back. “If he was in perfect shape with unfettered access to his divine power and Immortal ki? Given how he was able to slay the Lonely King with just one strike, he definitely wouldn’t need to fear the Blazesun Ruler. Even if he wasn’t able to win, Daolord Darknorth would definitely be able to defend against him! The problem is that he has failed his Daomerge, which means he can’t battle for too long. It’ll probably be very hard for him to fight against the Blazesun Ruler, who is in perfect shape.”

“Ugh.” Emperor Jade Rainbow said nervously, “I hope Daolord Darknorth cares about Nuwa to defend her.”

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Ning frowned. Of course he had to protect Nuwa! He’d protect her even at the cost of his own life.

“Flamewing, release a bit of your aura,” Ning sent.

“Need me to attack?” Flamewing asked rather eagerly.

“Don’t be impatient,” Ning instructed.

“Fine!” Flamewing immediately flew into the air while returning to his true form. The enormous, flame-bathed body of the Flamewing God appeared in the skies, emanating an aura of inexhaustible power. As a Chaos Primordial, its energy stores were virtually limitless, and its body was all but indestructible. Even Sith Exalts had to attack in numbers; a single one wouldn’t be able to do anything to it.

“A Chaos Primordial!” The mighty experts serving the Blazesun Ruler were all shocked, while the three leaders felt a sense of trepidation.

“Chaos Primordial, why are you standing with cultivators?” the crimson bloodfiend leader roared angrily.

“We’ve come on orders from the Blazesun Ruler. Are you going to make an enemy out of him?” the eight-armed chain-bearing giant roared angrily as well.

“You two idiots,” the red-robed maiden muttered.

“Who the hell is the Blazesun-whatever? I don’t know him!” Flamewing bellowed back.

The red-robed maiden secretly felt helpless. All Chaos Primordials had the intelligence of children, and they were born completely fearless. Nothing and no one could control them! Yes, the Blazesun Ruler might have the power of a Sith Exalt and was indeed stronger than Flamewing... so what if he was? He still wouldn’t be able to capture Flamewing, much less kill it! There was nothing the Blazesun Ruler could do to this troublemaker.

“Chaos Primordial, why must you interfere? This is an affair between us and these cultivators,” the red-robed maiden said.

“What’s with all the questions?!” Flamewing bellowed.

Ning said, “It is true that the five of them offended the Ruler by trespassing on his estate, but they weren’t aware that it belonged to him.

They thought that it was a relic site of some sort. Although they are in the wrong, capital punishment would not be fitting. I'll have them return all the treasures they took to the Blazesun Ruler and have this matter be brought to the end. Is that acceptable?"

"Is that a puny little Daolord speaking?" the red-robed maiden glanced downwards with a smirk. "And one who failed the Daomerge at that. You actually dare to speak?"

"He's my master!" Flamewing bellowed, turning to look at Ning. "Master, let me eat them!"

"Don't be impatient." Ning continued, "A minor matter like this isn't worth starting a war with us over."

"Hmph. A Daolord was actually able to tame a Chaos Primordial? This Chaos Primordial truly is a fool." The red-robed maiden chuckled. "As for this being a 'minor matter'? Hmph. The Jadeheart Lamp was something which the Ruler loved dearly. If all they had done was steal a few treasures, this matter would be at an end after they returned them... but they caused a large amount of wanton destruction and even wrecked the lamp! No one can save them now. Lord Houwu, don't hide in the back! Speak! Are you going to hand them over or not? If not, we're going to attack."

"B-but..." Lord Houwu turned frantically towards Ning. Based on how he normally handled things, he would lower his head and endure the threats while trying to come up with a way to let Patriarch Treewind and the others flee. As for whether or not Patriarch Treewind would perish during their flight, that was up to luck.

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"Make your choice!" the red-robed maiden barked coldly, while the two leaders by her side emanated auras of murderous malice.

Seeing this, Ning frowned. He immediately instructed, "Flamewing, attack with all your power."

"Hahahaha!" Flamewing had been waiting for just this order. Delighted,

it immediately charged forwards while belching out that dark-red fire from its mouth. The flames covered the entire region, spread out in every direction.

The crimson bloodfiends and the eight-armed giants were all instantly swept up within the flames. Although it felt rather painful, they were still in fine shape. These special beings were born with more powerful bodies than cultivators, after all! More importantly, they had always lived within the Blazesun Domain and thus were born with a fondness and affinity to fire. As a result, fire wasn't all that harmful to them.

Their bodies were extremely sturdy, but they would still die if the fire made its way inside of them. But of course, there was no way they would allow the flames to enter their bodies.

"Stop that Chaos Primordial!" the red-robed maiden commanded.

"Alright!"

"Leave it to us!" The crimson bloodfiend leader and the eight-armed giant leader both charged forwards, but they were clearly quite a bit slower and wouldn't be able to catch up to Flamewing.

Slash! Slash! Two of the eight-armed giants were torn into tiny pieces in the blink of an eye, the pieces then burnt to ashes by the flames.

"Damn it!" The two leaders were stunned and enraged.

"It is quite fast, much faster than the last Chaos Primordial I saw." The red-robed maiden frowned slightly as a semi-translucent dirt-colored gemstone appeared in her palm. She waved her hand, causing a series of black tentacles to appear out of nowhere and reach out towards Flamewing. These black tentacles were incredibly tough and took no damage from the flames which Flamewing belched out. A total of eight tentacles were created, and they came from all directions, making it impossible for Flamewing to avoid them.

Riiiiip! Flamewing used its sharp claws to tear them apart by force while also biting at them. One tentacle after another was severed, but they continued to tighten around them. Flamewing had so much brute force

that it was still able to split the tentacles apart, but they would then regrow to coil around it once more. This caused Flamewing's speed to drop drastically.

"Damn Sourcewalker!" The enraged Flamewing moved to pounce towards the red-robed maiden.

"Stop it in its tracks," the red-robed maiden instructed.

Boom! The crimson bloodfiend leader struck out with its giant double-bladed battleaxe towards Flamewing, while the eight-armed giant sent its chains flying out and lashing towards Flamewing like a whip.

Boom! Bang! The crimson bloodfiend leader and the eight-armed giant leader continuously attacked Flamewing, while the red-robed maiden continued to use her tentacles to bind and slow Flamewing down. For a time, Flamewing found itself surrounded and unable to break free.

"Goodsong, go and help Flamewing out," Ning instructed.

"Got it." Hegemon Goodsong was filled with the desire for battle, and he transformed into a streak of golden light that flew straight towards the four. However, halfway there he was slapped back by a black tentacle. That single black tentacle was enough to completely tie him down for a time. Hegemon Goodsong was just barely able to break it apart, but it then quickly regrew. Clearly, he was still quite a bit weaker than the Sourcewalker was.

Ning frowned when he saw this. The two armies of strange creatures had yet to attack. If all of the cultivators of Houwu City all took part in this fight, they would naturally be able to defend against this attack! However, their foe still held the upper hand in the Blazesun Domain. If the Blazesun Ruler gave the order, even more Sourcewalkers and strange creatures would appear.

"Darknorth," Nuwa sent mentally, "Perhaps we should back down and pretend to negotiate with them, then immediately flee. Given our fleeing abilities and your assistance, we should be able to escape."

"This is the Blazesun Domain. The Blazesun Ruler's influence is too

great,” Ning sent back. “Even if you are able to temporarily flee, you’ll probably be caught soon. Resolving this matter here is the best solution.”

Right at this moment, the red-robed maiden glanced downwards and shouted, “Did you think you’d be able to resist us just because you have a Chaos Primordial? The Blazesun Ruler has always been courteous to you cultivators, but do you really think that he is someone to be trifled with? You wrecked his estate and destroyed his beloved lamp. The five of them have to die! Obey my orders and attack!”

“Attack!”

“Attack!” The crimson bloodfiends and the eight-armed giants simultaneously let out earth-shaking bellows, then began to swoop down from the skies. An aura of endless might enveloped the entire city of Houwu.

Chapter 18: Ji Ning Attacks

When the cultivators inside Houwu City saw that swarm of creatures swooping down towards them, they couldn't help but start to panic slightly. In truth, they were unwilling to fight with these creatures to the death. According to the customary rule, everyone would just help out a bit to give the person who caused the problem a chance to flee; that was as far as everyone was willing to go.

The problem was, this time the one standing behind Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa was Daolord Darknorth. Thus, they hesitated.

“All of you, enter the city!” Lord Houwu immediately barked mentally, then turned to look at Ning desperately. “Daolord Darknorth, what should...”

If it wasn't for Ning, Lord Houwu would've followed the usual rule. There was no way he would be hesitating for this long.

Ning raised his head to stare upwards at the throng of creatures swooping down towards them. Suddenly, the 'ordinary' aura surrounding Ning began to dramatically skyrocket in power!

Boom! Boom! Boom!!! The skies above the city of Houwu began to shake as countless streams of sword-light appeared out of nowhere. Many millions of swords manifested with Ning at the center, and all of them hung up high. In a single instant, the entire region had transformed into a world of swords.

The creatures which had been furiously swooping down towards Houwu City came to a sudden, startled pause. The crimson bloodfiends and eight-armed giants stared at the sword-light in terror, not daring to move at all. They could sense how sharp the sword-light was, and in fact some of them were nicked by the sword-light, causing wounds to appear on their bodies.

They all understood that the omnipresent sword-light was able to annihilate them all with ease.

“This...”

“This is...” the crimson bloodfiend leader, the eight-armed giant leader, and the red-robed maiden were all stunned as they stared at the countless streams of sword-light in the world around them.

This was a world of the sword. Some of the sword-light seemed lively and joyful, some seemed moody and ghostly. Some were filled with malevolence, others were ephemeral and drifting. The countless streams of sword-light combined to form a perfect world of the sword.

“Commander?”

“Clan leader!” The crimson bloodfiends and the eight-armed giants all turned to stare at their leaders. They were filled with terror that sprang from within their very bones.

The red-robed maiden swallowed, hard. Her face was rather ashen, and she stared with a degree of fear at the white-robed youth who continued to stand there calmly. “He’s too terrifying. He hasn’t even attacked; all he’s done is unleashed his domain, and it’s already terrifying. T-t-this domain... most likely, there’s no way Hegemons can survive it at all. They’d be wiped out instantly.”

This was indeed Ning’s Sword Dao domain! Or, to put it another way, this was a domain formed by the prime essences of the Dao of the Sword! Anyone who wasn’t powerful enough would be slaughtered with ease by this domain. Ning didn’t wish to intensify the problems between him and the Blazesun Ruler; otherwise, the terrified creatures would’ve all been wiped out long ago, save for perhaps those three leaders. It wouldn’t have cost him a single scrap of his own power.

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This scene stunned all of the cultivators within Houwu City.

“So this is the power of the Eternal Omega Sword Dao?” They stared at the omnipresent streaks of sword-light in the skies. They could sense how terrifyingly powerful the sword-light was. Daolord Darknorth had reached such a terrifying level of power that he didn’t even need to personally strike; his domain alone could effortlessly annihilate anyone below the Otherverse Lord level of power.

“Now THIS is the real Daolord Darknorth!” Patriarch Treewind said with a sigh.

“It seems we’ll survive this,” Emperor Jade Rainbow said, still filled with awe and fear.

Lord Houwu raised his head to stare at the skies, his gaze filled with envy. “If only Daolord Darknorth was willing to transmit the Dao to me...”

“Master.”

“Darknorth.” Right now, there were two people who cared about Ning the most. The first was Su Youji, while the second was Nuwa.

The two of them truly cared about Ning’s life. For him to merely release a Dao domain was one thing, but if he truly wished to kill the three leaders he would have to use his own energies... which was akin to Ning using up his own lifespan! Su Youji’s feelings towards Ning went without saying, and while Nuwa had only met Ning a short while ago she already viewed him as one of her closest friends.

Her homeland had produced such a dazzling genius... someone who, even after failing the Daomerge, cared enough to then seek her out to ensure that she would safeguard the Three Realms. Nuwa felt a sense of admiration towards Ning; she naturally didn’t wish for Ning to use up any more of his life energy. This was doubly true because Ning was getting into this dispute for her sake!

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The two hundred-plus Hegemonic creatures all stood in midair, terrified. None of them dared to move at all.

“S-s-s-senior!” The double-bladed battleaxe-wielding crimson bloodfiend leader was the most frightened of them all. Even his voice quavered when he spoke.

Ning turned to sweep them with his gaze, and as he did the three leaders felt a sense of terror rise in their hearts. This Dao domain had completely enveloped the surrounding area and suppressed everything here.

“Scram!” Ning barked coldly, his voice echoing for countless kilometers around. The crimson bloodfiend leader lowered his head and gulped, so terrified that he immediately turned tail and fled. As for the other crimson bloodfiends under his command, they all followed him in fleeing.

The ashen-faced red-robed maiden took two steps back. She was hesitating. As a Sourcewalker, she was extremely intelligent and possessed tremendous skills of comprehension. She could naturally tell how terrifying this Daolord was... but the Blazesun Ruler truly was extremely angry. She wanted to try and negotiate and see if a better resolution was possible.

As for the eight-armed giant, he stared intently at Ning without backing down in the slightest.

The red-robed maiden spoke out: “I am Walker Scarletbind, and I serve the Blazesun Ruler. Dare I ask who you are, senior?”

“Darknorth,” Ning said.

“Scarletbind greets you, Daolord Darknorth.” For the first time, the red-robed maiden bowed her head with great respect. She showed nothing but disdain when meeting with other cultivators, but as soon as she saw the sword-light flooding the skies she understood just how terrifying this cultivator Daolord was, and how worthy of respect he was. His skill in sword-arts alone vastly surpassed the Blazesun Ruler she served.

“Walker Scarletbind.” Ning nodded. “I imagine you understand what I am intending. I do not wish for a battle to arise between the Blazesun Ruler and myself. A minor matter like this isn’t worth it.”

“I do understand,” the red-robed maiden said respectfully, “But... this time, the Ruler is extremely angry. I’m afraid that he won’t just let things rest.”

“Scarletbind, why are you wasting time on him? You there! Cultivator Daolord!” The eight-armed giant let out an earth-shaking shout: “What technique did you use to unleash this domain of swords? However... this thing isn’t a threat to me at all! Your sword domain is harmless to me. I’ll kill you with one lash of my chains. Let’s see how long you can maintain

your arrogance then!”

“Eight-Armed Hill, do NOT be rude,” the red-robed maiden said frantically.

“Don’t be fooled, Scarletbind! This cultivator Daolord is just putting up a false front of bravado. Cultivators love to lie, cheat, and steal, but all of them are very weak. He’s just a Daolord! How strong can he be?” The eight-armed giant leader forced down the fear he had felt earlier, transforming it into rage at the thought of having been deceived by Ning.

“DIE!” the eight-armed giant leader howled as he ran through the air towards Ning.

“You...!” The red-robed maiden hurriedly waved her hand, sending out one of the black tentacles and intending to use it to catch the eight-armed giant. However, the eight-armed giant’s chains began to clatter and clack, smashing the black tentacles apart. The eight-armed giant howled loudly, “Scarletbind, do you think I don’t know all your little tricks?”

The eight-armed giant turned towards Ning once more. “DIE!” His chains clanked with terrifying power that was nearly equivalent to the Flamewing God’s as he struck out at Ning.

The red-robed maiden felt both frantic and helpless. These creatures all had a far lower level of intelligence. Chaos Primordials weren’t so bad; they simply had childlike personalities. These creatures, however, had personalities as bizarre as their appearances. Some were sly, some were sinister, some were stupid, some were brutish... and as for this eight-armed giant, he was famous for his explosive temper. He easily went berserk... and now, he had just gone berserk again.

“Master, I’ll go stop him!” Flamewing moved to charge out.

“Leave it to me!” Ning commanded coldly. Flamewing stared wide-eyed at Ning, as did Nuwa and Su Youji from behind.

“Do not!” Nuwa said hurriedly.

“Flamewing won’t be able to dispose of him. It’ll keep causing trouble for us.” Ning stared at the distant eight-armed giant, which had almost

instantly charged towards him. A murderous look was in Ning's eyes which caused all the major powers present to hold their breaths. At his current level, Ning was invincible in all the Chaosverse against everyone save the Autarchs. How could he not feel a degree of pride in himself?

Whoosh. Ning stepped forward as well. All the cultivators in Houwu City raised their heads to look, with Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa staring particularly intently.

In this instant, time itself seemed to have froze. Ning stepped forward in a graceful and casual manner, and as he did so space itself seemed to have shrunk between him and the eight-armed giant. He instantly appeared in front of the giant, whose eyes had been filled with berserk savagery... but in the next instant, the look in the giant's eyes was replaced by a hint of shock.

Swoosh. Ning struck out with his sword. All of the cultivators present were able to see with clarity how Ning drew a single black sword from the sheath on his back, and then as part of the same motion delivered a chopping blow downwards.

Chapter 19: Blazesun Ruler

The godlike sword carved through the air, leaving behind streaks of sword-light that looked like petals frozen in the air. The streaks of sword-light then all connected to each other into a beautiful arc, and it was as though the dazzling, snow-white sword-light had come alive. It was like a dazzling snow flower that had bloomed with breathtaking beauty, and the petals of that flower just so happened to pass through the eight-armed giant's body, leaving behind a single giant wound.

Ji Ning's sword-intent spread out through the power of karma, instantly annihilating every scrap of truesoul the eight-armed giant possessed. The giant's life energy instantly vanished... but the dazzlingly beautiful snow flower of sword-light continued to hover there in the air.

Clink! Ning once more returned his sword into the sheath on his back... and with that, time seemed to return back to normal once more.

"Ah?!"

"This..."

"He twisted time?"

"That scene... it's been forever burned into my memories." The cultivators of Houwu City were all shocked. That sword-strike had been so beautiful! In addition, they had been able to see everything with perfect clarity. The drawing of the sword, the chopping, the flower of sword-light, the re-sheathing... it had all been clearly visible.

It must be remembered that it was extremely difficult to see the attacks of Hegemons with clarity! And to be precise, it wasn't that they had really seen Ning's attacks clearly; rather, Ning's sword-arts had emblazoned themselves into their memories, making it impossible for them to forget any detail.

Boom! The eight-armed giant fell down from the skies, landing on the ground below.

"It has a Sithe treasure on it!" Quite a few cultivators instantly grew

excited. Everyone could tell that those chains were quite extraordinary... but none of them dared to go and take it.

“Ugh. A major power like him would never suffer insults lightly.” The red-robed maiden couldn’t help but sigh as she watched from afar. She had wanted to stop the giant, but failed. “They are fine when calm, but when angered the end result shall be calamity. He had always been an idiot, but how could he be such an idiot in front such a major power?”

It was much like how no one would dare to offend an Autarch, or even an Autarch’s friends, family, and servants. There was no one who could endure the consequences of enraging an Autarch! The red-robed maiden could see that Daolord Darknorth was also someone who couldn’t be offended by the likes of her.

“The Eight-Armed Hill was simply too stupid. He deserved to die for offending you, Daolord Darknorth,” the red-robed maiden said hurriedly. “As for those cultivators the Ruler seeks to capture... Daolord, what do you think?”

“There’s no way I can hand them over to you,” Ning said. “Go ahead and tell the Blazesun Ruler that there’s no way I’ll hand them over. That’s my bottom line! Anything else is negotiable, but if we cannot come to an agreement and he insists on killing them... then there’s nothing I can say or do. Your Ruler can come by himself or bring his army; I, Darknorth, will be waiting for him.”

The red-robed woman’s heart trembled. What a fierce thing to say. There really were very few cultivators who would dare to say something like this to the Blazesun Ruler.

“I’ll inform the Ruler about this. I’ll be leaving now, then,” the red-robed maiden said. As she spoke, she turned and immediately departed alongside the remaining creatures under her command. No one paid any attention to the eight-armed giant’s corpse, nor did they dare to go pick up the Sithe weapon he had left behind.

Ning watched from afar as those creatures hurriedly departed into the horizons.

“Darknorth,” Nuwa said, a hint of apology in her eyes, “Because of me, you...”

“Haha, I’m someone who failed the Daomerge. Even if I’m extremely careful, I only have a few thousand chaos cycles left. A few less years won’t make any difference,” Ning said with a laugh.

“Then what of the Blazesun Ruler?” Nuwa was worried.

“Daolord, the Blazesun Ruler is a truly supreme Sourcewalker,” the nearby Hegemon Goodsong said.

Ning slowly nodded. “The Blazesun Ruler’s power cannot be underestimated. If we can avoid battle, that would be the best solution. Everyone, make your preparations. This very day, we shall depart from Houwu City!”

“Alright.”

“We’ll head out today.” Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow had come over as well, and they fully supported Ning’s decision. Although they knew Daolord Darknorth was incredibly powerful, they still felt a degree of fear towards the Blazesun Ruler! It was better to avoid battle.

.....

That very day, Ning led Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, and the others in departing from Houwu City.

“Be careful on your journey, Daolord.” Lord Houwu watched from afar as the realmship vanished from his demesnes.

“Lord Governor, you were far too rash! If you had merely asked Daolord Darknorth for some pointers, he would’ve agreed to give you some guidance,” the nearby silver-browed elder said.

“Forget it. That ship has already sailed. Just being able to witness that dazzling sword-strike was all worth it,” Lord Houwu said. “That sword-strike... I will probably never be able to forget it. It was simply too incredible.”

That dazzling, snow-colored, flower-like sword had already surpassed

the limits of sword-arts. It truly was unsurpassably beautiful.

.....

The Blazesun Domain was a truly mysterious place. It was filled with many Sithe treasuries, Sourcewalkers, Chaos Primordials, strange creatures, and multiple otherverses. It was one of the most marvelous places of the Chaosverse, one of the Eight Domains.

Swoosh! The red-robed woman and the crimson bloodfiend leader flew through the void side-by-side, finally landing upon a long walkway of frozen ice.

For a walkway of frozen ice to appear within the blazingly hot Blazesun Domain was truly a marvelous thing. Thanks to its vast size, the Blazesun Domain was a self-contained system unto itself that was extremely stable, and filled with places that had both mud and water. Ice, however, was still very rare, much less an entire walkway made out of ice.

The frozen walkway was semi-translucent and stretched off for countless kilometers. It was lined with stone columns to each side, and each column had a ball of fire blazing on top.

The red-robed maiden and the crimson bloodfiend leader walked across the walkway of ice. After walking for a time, they saw an enormous altar that had been sculpted out of ice. It had many layers of frozen steps which led to a frozen throne at the very top.

Atop the frozen throne sat a muscular man whose entire body was black. He was dressed in black armor, and his eyes were two blazing balls of fire. He rested his jaw on one hand as he stared downwards and said calmly, "The Eight-Armed Hill's lifestone has shattered, which means it is dead. How did it die? I do not believe the Lord Governor of Houwu City has the courage to launch a war against me! In addition, I've never humiliated or made things too difficult for their city. This time, they went too far in destroying something which I loved."

The crimson bloodfiend leader shivered, not saying a word. The red-robed maiden, however, bowed respectfully: "Ruler, we went on your orders to apprehend those five cultivators. As you said, the Lord Governor

of Houwu City would never dare to make an enemy out of you... but those five cultivators have a powerful backer.”

“A backer?” The muscular black figure stared downwards at them.

“Yes.” The red-robed maiden said hurriedly, “Their backer is named Daolord Darknorth!”

“A Daolord?” The muscular black figure was instantly astonished. In truth, neither the red-robed maiden or the Blazesun Ruler had heard the name ‘Daolord Darknorth’ before! Although the legend of Ning had spread quite far by now, it had only spread amongst the cultivators. No one would go out of their way to share news like this to Sourcewalkers or the other civilizations! In addition, the Sourcewalkers were located quite far away from each other; it was generally quite hard for them to send word to their fellows. Thus, there were very few Sourcewalkers who knew the legend of Daolord Darknorth.

“Are you joking with me?” the Blazesun Ruler said coldly.

“I wouldn’t dare.”

“We would never dare to lie to you, Ruler!” the crimson bloodfiend said hurriedly. “It truly was a Daolord, an extremely powerful one. He didn’t even use any techniques at all; he simply manifested countless streaks of sword-light in the world, and every single streak of sword-light was capable of slaying Hegemons with ease! He was utterly terrifying. I was completely dazed when I saw this.”

“What? He manifested countless streaks of sword-light, each of which could slay Hegemons?” The Blazesun Ruler rose to his feet in shock.

“Yes.” The red-robed maiden said hurriedly, “It should’ve been a domain formed by the Dao of the Sword! A terrifying one at that. The Eight-Armed Hill, that fool, actually thought that Daolord Darknorth was just faking it and putting on a false front, insisting on charging towards Daolord Darknorth and attacking him. I couldn’t even stop him! Daolord Darknorth used just a single blow of his sword to kill the Eight-Armed Hill. In addition, Daolord Darknorth is a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge. I can sense that his soul and truesoul were slowly dissipating

with every passing breath.”

The Blazesun Ruler murmured softly, “I’ve never even heard of such a terrifying Sword Dao domain. Can it be... a legendary ‘Eternal Omega Dao’, one of the sword?”

Omega Daos were all legends. The Blazesun Ruler knew of them, but he also knew that no one had ever succeeded in the Daomerge for an Omega Dao, and that no one had ever mastered an Eternal Omega Dao! But when he heard of how Ning had created such a terrifying Sword Dao domain, and that Ning was a Daolord who had failed the Daomerge... save for the Eternal Omega Sword Dao, the Blazesun Ruler couldn’t think of any other possibility.

“Interesting.” The Blazesun Ruler’s eyes lit up, and the flames that served for his eyes suddenly glowed brighter. “A Daolord who has failed the Daomerge but mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao? I’ve never heard of such a thing. Finally, something interesting has appeared to break up the monotony of life.”

Chapter 20: A Strange Feeling

“Scarletbind.” The Blazesun Ruler began to walk down from his altar of ice, his blazing eyes burning brightly. He ordered in his sonorous voice, “Come, accompany me to Houwu City. I can’t wait to meet this Daolord Darknorth!”

“Yes.” The red-robed woman immediately assented to the order.

“Sparring against those other seven Domain Rulers is completely pointless. Daolord Darknorth is a cultivator who has mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao... the first in the entire Chaosverse!” The Blazesun Ruler was filled with eagerness and a desire to do battle.

He stood at the very apex of power amongst Sourcewalkers. Each of the Eight Domains had a Domain Ruler, and all of them were at the level of the Sithe Exalts! There might be a few other supreme Sourcewalkers located in other incredibly distant parts of the vast Chaosverse, but there truly were very, very few of them.

.....

Just half a day later, the Blazesun Ruler reached Houwu City.

Rumble... a black warship which was completely made out of deepfire blackstone tore through spacetime and appeared in the skies above Houwu City.

“Huh?!”

“What IS that?” The Hegemons, Emperors, and other cultivators of Houwu City all stared in shock at the enormous black warship which had just appeared in the distant skies. They felt a sense of pure terror from the oppressive aura generated by this vessel. This was a powerful warship which was similar to the Stone Hellephant Wall, and it was the most powerful Sithe treasure which the Blazesun Ruler possessed. This was far more powerful than a mere realmship!

“That’s the Blazesun Ruler.” Lord Houwu and a few of the more experienced cultivators immediately recognized this ship, and they all flew

into the skies.

Whoosh! The surface of the giant warship rippled as a door appeared, followed by two figures flying out of it. The first was the red-robed maiden, Walker Scarletbind, who had been here just a short while ago. The other was undisputably the most terrifyingly powerful figure of the entire Blazesun Domain... the Blazesun Ruler.

When Lord Houwu saw the muscular black-colored figure appear, he immediately bowed respectfully: "Respectful greetings, Blazesun Ruler."

"Respectful greetings, Blazesun Ruler." The cultivators felt shock and fear, but on the surface they showed nothing but respect. They knew that the Blazesun Ruler was on a completely different level of power than them!

When adventuring through the Chaosverse, they had occasionally battled against Sourcewalkers and other marvelous creatures, but none of them would dare to contend against the Blazesun Ruler! He was simply far too powerful. Even dominating cultivators like the Lonely King or Lord Houwu would have no choice but to bow their heads in his presence.

The Blazesun Ruler was comparable in power to that of the most supreme Sithes. Even an Autarch wouldn't be able to slay a Sithe Exalt with just two or three full-power attacks. But of course, given enough time they could still accomplish it; in the end, there was a degree of difference in power between the Autarchs and the Exalts.

Still... to all other cultivators, the Blazesun Ruler was someone vastly beyond their level. This was why the Blazesun Ruler himself generally didn't deign to battle against cultivators; at most, he would only show his might against those foolish cultivators who had offended him. In this case, Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa had barged into his estate, completely wrecked it, looted it clean, and destroyed one of his beloved items. Of course he would be angry, and of course he had to make clear the weight of his displeasure!

"Daolord Darknorth. Where is he?" The Blazesun Ruler stared downwards, his voice booming out to shake the entire city of Houwu. As

he spoke, he scanned the city and searched it. Although he was able to find a few Samsara Daolords, he wasn't able to find one who had failed the Daomerge.

"Domain Ruler," Lord Houwu said, bowing once more, "Daolord Darknorth left Houwu City after defeating Scarletbind."

"He left?" The Blazesun Ruler was startled. He shook his head and murmured, "Can it be that he's afraid of me? He's the only cultivator in the entire Chaosverse who has ever mastered an Eternal Omega Dao... and he actually chose to flee instead of fighting? I truly am disappointed."

None of the cultivators below him dared to say a thing. They were afraid of Daolord Darknorth, but they were also afraid of the Blazesun Ruler! In fact, they were even more afraid of the Blazesun Ruler, because there was a limit to how long Daolord Darknorth would be around for. Sooner or later, he would die and his Dao would vanish. The Blazesun Ruler, in contrast, possessed an endless lifespan.

"Where did Daolord Darknorth go?" the Blazesun Ruler growled.

"None of us dared to ask," Lord Houwu said hurriedly. "Daolord Darknorth and the others left quite quickly. They could've gone anywhere."

The Blazesun Ruler laughed coldly. "This is my Blazesun Domain. They won't be able to escape it. Let's go, Scarletbind." The Blazesun Ruler turned and walked back towards his black warship. "Let's go find this Daolord Darknorth."

"Yes, Domain Ruler." The red-robed maiden immediately followed behind obediently.

The giant black warship left with a rumble. All of the cultivators below finally let out sighs of relief. Even Lord Houwu still felt a hint of lingering fear.

"Thankfully, the Domain Ruler didn't make us the object of his ire. If he did, we'd probably all have to run for our lives. Even though we have the citadel protecting us, it's likely that only a few of us would make it," the

silver-browed elder said.

“Daolord Darknorth on one side, the Blazesun Ruler on the other. I cannot afford to offend either one.” Moments later, a startled look appeared on Lord Houwu’s face. “That’s odd. Why is it that the Blazesun Ruler only asked about Daolord Darknorth and didn’t ask about Nuwa and the others? It was Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa who wrecked his estate. Logically speaking, his main target should be Patriarch Treewind and Nuwa, right?”

“Right.” The silver-browed elder was puzzled as well. “Can it be that he was able to foresee that Nuwa’s group is travelling alongside Daolord Darknorth? But I’ve never heard anyone say that he is particularly accomplished in the Dao of Numerancy.”

“That IS odd.” Lord Houwu was similarly puzzled.

What none of them realized was that by now, the Blazesun Ruler no longer cared about Nuwa’s team at all. His ‘beloved item’ was nothing more than a trinket he was fond of. What the Blazesun Ruler really wanted to do was to find Daolord Darknorth and have a good fight with him!

.....

The Blazesun Ruler gave the order, fully mobilizing all of his forces to begin a search for Daolord Darknorth.

.....

More than 300,000 years after Ning and Nuwa had first met.

Whoosh! A realmship was flying through a sea of fiery clouds. Inside the realmship was the white-robed Ning and a silver-robed Nuwa, who were having a conversation with each other. Nuwa was now dressed in longer silver robes, and a red diamond was affixed to the middle of her forehead. When the Lonely King had wielded these weapons, they had emanated icy and evil auras, but on Nuwa they looked noble and beautiful. The silver robes glowed with a holy aura that looked like moonlight, while the red diamond put Nuwa’s alabaster-white skin on full display.

Nuwa and Ning spent much of their time discussing the Dao. Ning held nothing back, unstintingly sharing his own experiences in detail. This caused Patriarch Treewind and the others to feel a sense of tremendous jealousy! However, Ning occasionally provided them with a few pointers as well... but he naturally didn't put as much effort into it as he did into teaching Nuwa.

"Treewind, Jade Rainbow... based on my calculations, we should be arriving soon, yes?" Ning suddenly asked.

"Daolord," "Daolord," Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow answered at the same time. After sharing a glance, Patriarch Treewind was the one to answer: "We should arrive in just three more months. By then, you'll be able to see the imprisoned Sithe Exalt."

Ning smiled and nodded. The reason why Ning had been unwilling to meet the Blazesun Ruler and spar against him was because the more he battled, the faster his truesoul would dissipate. And yet, it would take nearly half a million years to use a realmship to fly from Houwu City to the outskirts of the Blazesun Domain. Given how much time even this 'fastest' path would take, it was entirely possible that the Blazesun Ruler would be able to intercept them!

Thus, Ning had chosen to take a roundabout path that would make it harder for the Domain Ruler to find them. And since they had already chosen to take a roundabout path, Ning decided to go ahead and pay a visit to the imprisoned Sithe Exalt! Ning had never seen a Sithe Exalt before and was quite curious about them. He also had the vague feeling that there had to be a secret hidden behind the fact that the six Sithe Exalts had been imprisoned in six of the Eight Domains at the very center of the Chaosverse!

The realmship continued to advance, occasionally encountering a few creatures who Hegemon Goodsong or Flamewing quickly dispatched. Another month went by in the blink of an eye as they drew closer and closer to the imprisoned Sithe Exalt.

"Halt!" Ning suddenly shouted.

Hegemon Azurefiend, who was responsible for controlling the realmship, immediately halted the ship and brought it out of its spacetime warp. Everyone in the realmship turned to stare at Ning.

“Master, what is it?” Flamewing was rather puzzled.

“These ripples...” Ning closed his eyes, sensing as those faint ripples washed over him. These ripples were constantly changing and transforming, but on the surface they seemed quite ordinary. Given how much fire elemental energy the Blazesun Domain held, for there to be a few energy ripples was quite normal. “These ripples... in this area, they’ve actually scattered apart into a total of over three hundred million ripples, but they should all come from the same source.”

Ning murmured softly, “Vast, ancient, and powerful...”

The nearby Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, Azurefiend, Goodsong, and other Hegemonic figures were all puzzled. They could hear what Ning was murmuring, but they didn’t sense anything at all.

Chapter 21: The Path to Becoming the Strongest Autarch

“Listen to my commands.” Ji Ning opened his eyes, which were shining brightly. He used his left hand to point towards a certain direction: “Advance towards that direction.”

“Understood,” Hegemon Azurefiend acknowledged.

The Blazesun Domain was filled with too many dangers. Not even a realmship could be used to engage in long-distance warps through spacetime; at most, only short warps were possible. Sometimes, ordinary flight was necessary as well.

“Now this direction.” Ning’s finger suddenly moved to point a different location. “Now over there.” Ning followed his senses, and as they moved closer he continuously had them change directions.

Whooooosh. A strange but subtle sound, almost like the roaring of the waves of a river, was beginning to pervade this entire region. Although everyone within the realmship remained puzzled, the sound of the ‘roaring river’ was enough to let them know that Ning was leading them to some sort of secret place.

“It continually shifts through spacetime, moving from one continuum to another. Its almost like a maze...” Ning smiled. “It’s hidden quite well, but it still won’t be able to evade my senses. Advance!”

Ning continued to point, guiding the realmship to fly up, left, down, right... the direction constantly changed, and every so often they would even warp into a different continuum. As time flowed on, the echoing sound of the ‘river water’ began to grow increasingly loud as well. Five months went by in the blink of an eye, and by now the sound roared like thunder.

BOOM! The realmship suddenly rammed into an invisible barrier, which bulged inwards. The realmship continued to press inwards, quickly piercing through the invisible membrane. As it did so, the environment

around it completely changed.

“Wow.”

“What in the...” The cultivators in the realmship were all stunned, as was the Flamewing God. Su Youji’s eyes turned completely round with shock. The calmest was Ning, but even he narrowed his eyes as he stared at their new surroundings.

They were now in the midst of an enormous, fiery-red sea. If one took a close look at the fiery liquid within the sea, one would see that it was actually composed of incredibly dense and concentrated flames! The countless flames all flowed together like a liquid, coming together to form an indescribably vast sea. At the very center of this sea was an enormous whirlpool that was continuously twisting and churning, causing all of the fiery ‘liquid’ within the sea to move and generate those rumbling roars. This was a sound that surpassed the limits of spacetime and spread out in every direction.

“What in the world IS this place?” Hegemon Azurefiend sighed with astonishment. “This entire sea is composed of countless flames that have been... liquefied? And the flames... I feel as though they are on par with the flames which Flamewing belches out.”

“Yeah... what is this place? How is it that a place like this can exist in the Blazesun Domain? I’ve never even heard of it!” Patriarch Treewind didn’t understand either.

“I like this place, Master! I want to dive right in.” Flamewing looked excitedly at Ning.

“Go ahead.” Ning smiled and nodded.

Swoosh! Flamewing immediately exited the realmship and transformed into his true form, then dove straight down towards the flaming sea. Even in his true form, it was nothing more than a tiny little dot in the great sea. Plop! It plunged into the flaming sea, kicking up some ‘spray’! As the ‘water’ shot up in Flamewing’s wake, it quickly dissipated into flames.

“Whoah. Whoaaaaah! This is nice! Ahahaha! This feels great!”

Flamewing delightedly swam through the flames, growling and howling happily, “Master, come and try it out for yourself! It feels great! The last time I felt this comfortable was when I was born.”

Ning and the others all flew out of the realmship, then stood in the empty void and stared at the great sea. “When it was first born?” Ning’s face twitched. “Flamewing was born in the Quintessence of the Chaosverse. That means that this place is actually quite similar to the Quintessence? But there’s no way this place can be the location of the prime essences.”

Ning’s will was able to maintain constant contact with the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword, and so he had a rough idea as to where the prime essences were located. This place was not it.

“Such an enormous amount of fire energy... I’ve never seen anything like this,” Hegemon Goodsong mumbled.

“If my guess is correct,” Emperor Jade Rainbow said, “This place should be the true nucleus of the Blazesun Domain.”

“The true core?”

“Are you saying that the entire Blazesun Domain in all its vastness... originated from this place?” they all spoke out simultaneously.

Ning continued to scrutinize the place carefully. His gaze fell upon the very center of the giant whirlpool, seeing through it as he scanned the many traces and scars within. They actually brought Ning many new insights, and he immediately said, “Jade Rainbow speaks the truth. This place is indeed the wellspring of the Blazesun Domain! The reason why the Blazesun Domain has such an enormous amount of energy within it is because of this place. It all stems from here. Stay here; I’m going to go take a look. No one is to disturb me.” As he spoke, he flew straight towards the whirlpool.

“Be careful, Master,” Su Youji called out with worry.

“Just wait for me here. I’ll be fine.” Ning’s voice echoed in the air, while he himself had already reached the area directly above the giant

whirlpool.

Boom! Boom! Boom! The giant whirlpool was filled with limitless amounts of power, and the rumbles emanating from it were especially loud here.

The region around Ning began to be filled with his Sword Dao domain, which served to protect him. It must be remembered that Ning's domain was able to slay even Hegemons with ease; to use it to repel the 'water' of the whirlpool was quite easy.

Whoosh. As Ning slowly descended, the Sword Dao domain ensured that the liquid flames were repelled and pushed aside.

"So that's how it is." Ning slowly sank deeper into the whirlpool. The region around him for three hundred meters was completely empty, with the liquid flames unable to move into it. The deeper Ning sank, the more stunned he felt as he saw how the giant whirlpool had been formed.

"So fire in liquid form can possess such tremendous power..." The more Ning saw, the more thoughts filled his mind. His Primaltwin had temporarily returned to the Azureflower Estate, and was making use of the Autarch's stone dais to completely focus on understanding the profound mysteries behind the whirlpool.

A mere two days later, Ning had reached the Hegemonic level in the Dao of Water!

This was primarily because his Eternal Omega Sword Dao had propelled him to simply incredible heights of insight. It was like a towering skyscraper, allowing him to understand other Daos with far more ease. In recent years, he had continuously improved in many other Daos. This time, he was able to break through to the Hegemonic level in the Dao of Water with just one 'blow'. However... even though he had reached the Hegemonic level, it still couldn't compare to his Eternal Omega Sword Dao.

"The Blazesun Domain is filled with the power of the element of fire. Who would've thought that its wellspring is actually able to form a liquid stream which holds so many secrets of the Dao of Water? The way it has

naturally formed has resulted in it completely merging the secrets of the Dao of Fire and the Dao of Water into itself. There's no way to tell them apart." Ning laughed, then his eyes suddenly lit up: "Why do I have the sudden feeling that I can merge the Dao of Water into my Sword Dao as well?"

Ning immediately sat down in the lotus position. His Sword Dao domain once more spread out to three hundred meters, pushing aside the liquid fire.

After Ning had reached Hegemony in the Dao of Water, he suddenly had the feeling that he was completely capable of infusing it into his Omega Sword Dao. This was something which happened as a matter of course, and as soon as he spent a bit of time meditating on it he immediately knew why.

"So... my path to Autarchy is actually different from that of the other Autarchs." Ning was stunned. For the first time, he understood how he should break through to Autarchy. His lifespan was now limited, which meant he probably wouldn't have the chance to do it... but he now knew what he should do!

From Hegemony to Autarchy... the paths which Autarch Bolin, Autarch Awakener, and all other Autarchs had taken were identical. They had first become Hegemons, then reached the Hegemonic level of understanding in other Daos as well! After gaining enough insight into Hegemonic Daos, they would finally and naturally break through to become Autarchs. At that point in time, they would reach the Daobirth level of 'one Dao births many Daos'. It would naturally form a 'Daobirth Essence' which was capable of forming the prime essences of a universe.

Using this 'Daobirth Essence', the Autarchs were able to create alternate universes which would have prime essences that came from the 'Daobirth Essence' which the Autarch had devised.

"But I'm different from them," Ning murmured. "Autarch Bolin... for him, his 'one Dao' which was the Dao of the Claw, while his 'many Daos' referred to all other Daos. They came to form a 'Daobirth Essence' which

could also be referred to as a 'Claw Daobirth Essence'. As for Autarch Awakener, his Dao was the Dao of Wind. He used it to reach the Daobirth level, and his 'Daobirth Essence' was the 'Wind Daobirth Essence'."

Ning had received Autarch Awakener's legacy and had seen the Dao-guidance of Autarch Bolin. Thus, he knew that Autarchs were strongest in their own specific Daos. Autarch Bolin's had been that of the 'Claw Daobirth Essence' as he was strongest in the Dao of the Claw; his 'many Daos' were only at the Hegemonic level. As for Autarch Awakener, he was most powerful in the Dao of the Wind, whereas all his other Daos were merely at the Hegemonic level.

"When they were Hegemons, all the Hegemonic Daos they mastered were all on equal footing. I, however, am different!"

Ning took a deep breath. "My Eternal Omega Sword Dao is simply overwhelmingly powerful. It far surpasses all other Daos, to the point where Daos such as a Hegemonic Dao of Water can be infused into it, making the Dao of Water part of my Eternal Omega Sword Dao! The more Hegemonic Daos I infuse into my Eternal Omega Sword Dao, the more massive and powerful it will become. After it accumulates enough, it will then undergo a fundamental evolution and catapult to a new level... an Autarch-level Omega Dao."

Ning finally understood. If he became an Autarch, he would be an Omega Dao Autarch, the most powerful of all Autarchs! Alas... Ning knew that this would be an extremely difficult path to walk. The other Autarchs 'only' had to master multiple Hegemonic Daos, then gain an epiphany and then break through. He not only needed to master those Daos, he also needed to figure out how to fully infuse them into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao! The process of infusion would be far more difficult than merely mastering those Hegemonic Daos.

If he wanted to infuse those other Daos and then evolve his Eternal Omega Dao, it would take time, luck, and many insights. The problem was, his lifespan was extremely limited; he only had a few thousand chaos cycles left. This wasn't going to be even close to enough!

“Although I know how I can become an Autarch, I don’t have enough time. What a pity.” Ning slowly shook his head. “It doesn’t matter. I’ll first completely fuse the Dao of Water into my Eternal Omega Sword Dao.”

Ning immediately closed his eyes and focused all of his efforts into this task.

Chapter 22: Arrival

Time flowed on one day at a time.

“How long is Daolord Darknorth going to be training for?” Patriarch Treewind stared at the wellspring of fire at the very center of that giant flaming sea. There was an absolutely enormous vortex there, and at the center of the vortex there was a white-robed figure seated in the lotus position a few hundred meters deep.

“As I see it,” Emperor Jade Rainbow sent mentally, “Given that Daolord Darknorth has failed the Daomerge and has a limited lifespan, what’s the point of training? By now, he’s probably second to only the Autarchs themselves in power. If I was Daolord Darknorth, I’d spend the rest of my days wandering about and visiting all of those places of legend. I’d especially want to visit the legendary Sithe homelands. I’d definitely wander through that entire place. After doing so, I would be able to die contentedly.”

“Hmph. That’s why you aren’t Daolord Darknorth,” Patriarch Treewind snickered.

Emperor Jade Rainbow was startled by this comment, but moments later he nodded in agreement: “That’s true. He’s already failed his Daomerge, but he’s still intoxicated by cultivation... no wonder he was able to reach such heights.”

“Woohoo! Master, this place is awesome! C’mon, let’s have fun together!” The Flamewing God was happily rolling around in the sea of fire. Every so often, it would swim over to Ning, but when it saw how Ning was still meditating silently it didn’t dare to actually disturb Ning. Instead, it turned to wander through the other parts of the great sea.

Azurefiend, Hegemon Goodsong, Nuwa, Su Youji, and the others all watched this marvelous scene from afar.

“Such an awesome amount of power. If someone was able to take full control over it, most likely not even an Autarch would be able to withstand him,” Hegemon Goodsong said with a sigh.

“There’s no way it can be controlled. That’s the natural energy of the Chaosverse itself,” Su Youji said.

“Darknorth truly is formidable,” Nuwa praised. “He’s able to force the ‘water’ of the flaming sea to a distance of three hundred meters, just by using his Sword Dao domain.”

“But three hundred meters is nothing,” Azurefiend said, “Nothing more than a tiny little part of the entire flaming sea.”

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They also benefited from their observations, but only Ning was at a high enough level of insight that he could understand the functioning and the mysteries of this place, the wellspring of the Blazesun Domain. Thanks to this place, it had taken him merely two days to improve his mastery of the Dao of Water to the Hegemonic level.

“The Dao of Water has now been infused into my Sword Dao. So this is the result...” As Ning slowly gained a greater level of understanding, his Sword Dao had become even vaster.

If a Dao was to be described in physical size, then Ning’s Eternal Omega Sword Dao had already reached an incredible height, the same height which an Autarch’s Daobirth was at, but it was even purer. Ning’s Dao was comparable to an Autarch’s Dao. The only problem was, it was a bit inferior in terms of its ‘breadth’! Autarchs had to upgrade multiple Daos to the Hegemonic level in order to reach Autarchy; in comparison, Ning was lacking in this regard.

Now, Ning was slowly infusing his Dao of Water into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao, causing its ‘breadth’ to slowly improve as well. Although its raw attack power didn’t increase by that much, it did change in certain other areas! For example, Ning’s Dao of the Sword was now as gentle as water, making it softer and more elastic when defending. Most important of all, after Ning infused the Dao of Water into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao, his Dao was even gentler in nurturing his soul and truesoul, causing the disintegration process to slow down by quite a bit.

“I understand now. As I slowly infuse more and more Daos into my

Sword Dao, it'll change as well. It'll become more lingering, more dominating, have more vitality... or perhaps be able to pierce through even greater amounts of spacetime..." Ning was slowly comprehending the way forward. It would be hard for him to make his Dao any 'higher', but he could continuously 'broaden' it. As he made use of the mysteries of countless Daos, there would come the day when he gained that moment of sudden insight... at which point, he would undergo a final evolution and become an Omega Autarch! When that happened, he would completely surpass all the other Autarchs.

Alas... Ning himself could tell that he would need an extremely long period of time if he was to succeed. What he lacked most of all right now was just that – time!

"Although I'll fall, at least I'll fall while trodding the path towards Autarchy." Ning didn't feel the slightest bit dispirited. As he continued upon his path, he would at least have the chance to see the glorious light at the apex from afar. Even though he didn't have much time left, every extra step he managed to take would bring him a sense of accomplishment and gratification.

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Time flowed on. Soon, Ning had spent over five hundred million years training within the vortex at the center of the flaming sea. Nuwa and the others, as cultivators, were naturally quite patient. None of them, not even a Daolord like Su Youji, would care about a short period of time like a mere half-billion years.

"What's going on?" The Blazesun Ruler was seated atop the frozen throne on the altar, narrowing his eyes pensively. Below him stood a total of eight figures. These were his most important generals.

"Domain Ruler," a stooped and short figure spoke out brightly, "We've laid down scouts in all of the likely locations throughout the entire Blazesun Domain. So long as Daolord Darknorth is still here, we should be able to find him. My guess is that he hasn't left; he's still in the Blazesun Domain."

“But we’ve already searched the entire Blazesun Domain. We’ve gone everywhere there is to go and have questioned all the various races. There are no traces of him at all.”

“The Blazesun Domain is enormous. They might’ve fled into some particularly remote region.” The various generals began to argue and debate amongst themselves.

“Shut your mouths,” the Blazesun Ruler barked coldly. Everyone below fell silent right away.

“Could Daolord Darknorth truly have left?” A resentful look was in the Blazesun Ruler’s eyes. He had been lonely for a very, very long time. The only ones who could pose a challenge to him were the Sithe Exalts and the cultivator Autarchs! Alas, the Sithe Exalts had all been imprisoned and weren’t available for sparring, while the Autarchs were completely transcendent. There was no way to find an Autarch who didn’t go out of his way to reveal himself... and even if the Blazesun Ruler did manage to find an Autarch, he would never dare to issue a challenge!

“There is one last possibility.” The Blazesun Ruler’s eyes suddenly lit up. “Could he have gone there?” Even the Blazesun Ruler himself had only discovered that place thanks to a lucky coincidence. Every so often, he would go there by himself and train. He felt certain that he was the only person in the entire Blazesun Domain who had ever discovered it.

“Daolord Darknorth is someone who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao. He might actually have discovered it as well. I’ll go take a look.” The Blazesun Ruler’s eyes lit up as he said, “I’ll go take a look.” He suddenly rose to his feet, then entered his vast black warship by himself and quickly departed, with all of his subordinates watching.

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The Blazesun Ruler spent a total of three years as he passed through all the various obstacles. Finally, he arrived.

Rumble... a giant black warship suddenly pierced through a distant membrane and appeared.

“Eh?”

“What’s that?” Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, Azurefiend, Su Youji, and the other cultivators were either silently meditating or chatting and laughing as they waited for Ning next to the realmship. They could all sense an enormous disturbance and couldn’t help but turn to stare into the skies. There, they saw that enormous warship appear, radiating that aura of terrifying power.

Nuwa and the others all jumped to their feet. “Not good!” Patriarch Treewind’s face turned ashen. “That’s the Blazesun Ruler’s warship.”

“Hahaha!!!” A deep, sonorous laugh rang out like the waves of the ocean, shaking every inch of the vast sea of flames, right down to its very depths. “I knew that Daolord Darknorth had to be hiding here! Hahaha... as I thought, Daolord Darknorth truly lives up to his reputation. He actually found the Wellspring Sea.”

As the laughter echoed throughout the area, the surface of the giant warship flowed apart to reveal an opening. A muscular, black-skinned man came flying out through the opening. The aura emanating from this man caused everyone present to feel a sense of fear. All of the cultivators trembled. None of them would be able to resist him; the only result would be a slaughter.

“That’s the Blazesun Ruler.”

“He’s caught up to us!” Emperor Jade Rainbow’s face was completely ashen.

Whoosh! The Flamewing God, which had been swimming within the sea of fire, suddenly soared into the skies, its wings spread and its entire body bathed in flames. Its scales stood up straight like the hair on a cat as it stared intently at the black-skinned man. Although the Flamewing God’s body was much larger, it was clearly in a state of maximum wariness right now. It could sense that the black-skinned man standing before it was a danger to it.

The feeling was much like when it had faced that Sithe Exalt! Perhaps Flamewing would be able to keep itself safe thanks to its indestructible

body, but if it actually tried to fight this man then it would be completely dominated.

“Chaos Primordial, eh?” The black-skinned man glanced towards Flamewing, a smile playing at the corners of his lips. “Chaos Primordials who like fire are quite rare. Young fellow, you should join me after I dispose of your master.”

“In your dreams,” Flamewing howled, but it didn’t dare to attack. It knew that if it did, it would be utterly dominated.

The black-skinned man couldn’t even bother to glance at the others. His attention was fully focused on the white-robed figure that lay hidden deep within that giant vortex. His grin grew wider. He truly had picked the perfect opponent; the man was able to force away the flaming waters of the sea merely through a Sword Dao domain!

Chapter 23: Ji Ning and the Blazesun Ruler

“Daolord Darknorth, get your ass out here!!!” the black-skinned man shouted loudly. BOOM! A ripple that could be seen with the naked eye suddenly swept out and blasted at the distant vortex. This scene caused Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, and the others to all feel shock – the man was far too powerful!

Without question, Chaos Primordials and Sourcewalkers were the most favored children of the prime essences of the Chaosverse. Chaos Primordials were born with bodies that were unfathomably stronger than the bodies of the Golden Emperors of the Sithe, and they had more energy reserves than entire realmverses. If a Chaos Primordial managed to somehow train to the Hegemonic level, it would probably be stronger than even the Sithe Exalts!

As for Sourcewalkers, although they had weaker bodies and energy levels than Chaos Primordials, they were still far superior to cultivators in both respects! Even the weakest of Sourcewalkers who never trained at all would still be at the Hegemonic level of power, a testament to their might. Just a bit of effort and they would become comparable to Otherverse Lords in might... and if they managed to upgrade their insights into the Hegemonic level, then they would have the power of Sithe Exalts!

Alas, both Sourcewalkers and Chaos Primordials were extremely, extremely few in number. Thus, the entire race of Sourcewalkers ‘only’ had around ten or so members who were at the Sithe Exalt level of power.

Everything in the Chaosverse was fair. Cultivators were blessed with far fewer gifts, but the most dazzling cultivators had absolutely incredible powers of insight and comprehension, such as Ning and the Autarchs. In fact, even the likes of God Emperor Helong or Nuwa vastly surpassed all Sourcewalkers in terms of comprehension.

BOOM! The vortex of liquefied fire suddenly exploded as the wave of power slammed into Ji Ning’s Sword Dao domain.

A white-robed youth with a black scabbard on his back came rising from the sea. He walked through the empty air until he reached a high point in the skies, then turned and stared at the muscular black-skinned man aboard the distant black warship.

“Blazesun Ruler.” Ning had a smile on his face.

“Why the hell were you running?” The Blazesun Ruler was palpitating with malevolence, and the two fiery globes that served as his eyes glowed with dazzling light. “I can’t believe you actually hid here for so long.”

“I was intrigued and drawn here by the Wellspring Sea,” Ning said with a laugh. “As for wishing to avoid battle? I’m a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge. When I fight, I’m using up my own lifespan. I naturally wish to avoid combat when possible.”

“That’s not for you to decide.” The Blazesun Ruler stretched out with his right hand, causing a giant fiery axe to appear within it. The axe’s surface actually glimmered with scorching black flames.

“I’m impressed, Blazesun Ruler. This axe looks quite extraordinary.” Ning then glanced at the giant black warship. “I once saw another warship which was also completely covered with deepfire blackstone. That warship was named the Tigerhill, but it was already ruined. Domain Ruler, your warship seems quite similar to it.”

“You can jabber as much as you like, but you aren’t going to be able to avoid this battle.” The Blazesun Ruler was filled with the desire to do battle, and flames were beginning to actually fly out of his eyes. “Die, Daolord Darknorth!”

All his life, the one thing he loved the most was to engage in exhilarating battles against other apex experts! Alas, ever since he had become the Blazesun Ruler he had never again experienced such a battle. Today, however, he was going to get exactly what he wanted. He even shouted out the word ‘die’ because Daolord Darknorth would only fight with full power when his own life was on the line. That was the type of battle which would get the Blazesun Ruler’s blood pumping! A mere sparring match would be completely meaningless.

“Eh?” Ning could sense the murderous intent raging within his opponent. Ning couldn’t help but frown: “Blazesun Ruler...”

“Cut the crap. Fight or die!” The Blazesun Ruler could no longer hold back, and he immediately charged straight towards Ning.

“I guess that’s that.” Ning truly didn’t want to fight and waste his remaining lifespan here. It just wasn’t worth it; the Blazesun Ruler was overwhelmingly powerful, and there was no way Ning could simply dispose of him in just one or two attacks.

“You are forcing my hand, you battle-crazed maniac. Very well, then. I’ll teach you a lesson.” Ning reached out with his right hand, drawing forth a Northbow sword from the sheath on his back. There was no way he would use all six swords at the same time... because that would use up his lifespan even faster!

“Fight!” The Blazesun Ruler charged through the skies, leaving behind a fiery-red streak behind him. He raised his axe up high, transforming it into an arc of flaming energy that seemed capable of chopping anything apart. The axe was a savage weapon by nature, and the Blazesun Ruler’s mastery over the Dao of Fire made it even more explosive.

“He truly is blessed with an incredible body and natural talents. He’s merely at the Hegemonic level of insight, but he’s able to unleash an utterly terrifying level of power,” Ning murmured softly as he lifted his Northbow sword up.

Rumble... countless streaks of sword-light spread out in every direction. This was his Sword Dao domain! The sword-light from his Sword Dao domain was able to kill Hegemons with ease. Its power was so great that it was on par with an Otherverse Lord’s full-force attack! Under Ning’s control, the flood of sword-light moved to bar the Blazesun Ruler’s path, serving as layers of obstacles that continuously stabbed at every part of his body, disrupting his movements and the mysteries behind his axe-attack.

This axe-attack was clearly a powerful one, but with Ning’s Sword Dao domain continuously disrupting the Blazesun Ruler’s movements the axe turned sluggish. The mysteries behind its movements were disrupted,

causing its power to lessen dramatically.

“Mediocre insights.” Ning shook his head. If this person was a cultivator, Ning would be able to slay him with a single strike.

“Impressive, Daolord Darknorth! Your Sword Dao domain is truly powerful, and your sword-arts are truly marvelous. You were able to disrupt my technique with ease. I once battled against a Sithe Exalt during the Dawn War, but not even he was as tough as you.” The Blazesun Ruler stared at Ning. “But I have yet to unleash my full power.”

The Blazesun Ruler let out a furious roar, his body beginning to be covered with flames. At the same time, the black armor covering his body began to flow like water, transforming to cover every single inch of his body. As for the fiery axe in his hands, the runes on the surface of the axe-handle suddenly lit up as flaming light appeared on the axe-edge. The power of this axe was rising to a level which caused even Ning to feel a hint of danger.

“Now THIS is my full power. DIE!” The Blazesun Ruler, covered by that black liquid armor, went completely berserk as he charged forwards, using his giant axe to carve a path through the Sword Dao domain. The domain was now no longer able to affect him at all.

“How brutish. Now this is the definition of the ‘brute-force method’,” Ning murmured softly. He took a single step forwards. Whoosh! He instantly warped through space and appeared right in front of the Blazesun Ruler.

“That’s fast!” The Blazesun Ruler was shocked. Ning was simply far too fast; this was an enormous advantage which Ning had thanks to his overwhelmingly superior level of insight into the Dao! “But fast alone is useless.” The Blazesun Ruler immediately chopped downwards with his giant axe with tremendous power. He felt confident that even if his opponent was the Sithe Exalt he had battled so long ago during the Dawn War, the only choice would be to use a ‘soft’ technique to ablate the power of his strike.

Ning, however, just waved his sword. His strike seemed quite ordinary,

but it was bizarrely fast, so fast that the Blazesun Ruler's giant axe was completely unable to block it. Ning's sword slammed directly against the Blazesun Ruler's body... and in that instant, the power of Ning's sword suddenly erupted. In this instant, Ning's sword became the most dazzling thing in this entire realm, and his sword-light blazed with a light that shone thousands of times brighter than the giant axe.

Now THIS was Ning's full-power strike!

SLASH! The sword pierced straight through the layer of liquid black armor and cut deep into the Blazesun Ruler's body, piercing all the way through and coming out from his back.

"What an impressive 'invulnerable form'." The power of this sword-strike was causing enormous internal destruction to the Blazesun Ruler's vital energy, but Ning could sense that the Blazesun Ruler's 'invulnerable flameform' was resisting it fiercely. The power of Ning's strike was used up after merely destroying 5% of the Blazesun Ruler's truesoul.

This had been a full-strength strike from Ning! If Ning wanted to actually kill the Blazesun Ruler, it would take him twenty such attacks... but if the Blazesun Ruler had other protective abilities up his sleeve, it might take fifty attacks or even more. The black warship was a good example; Ning had the vague feeling that it was powerful enough to completely disrupt the tempo of this battle. If it was factored in, it would probably take Ning more than a hundred strikes in order to kill the Blazesun Ruler.

It must be remembered that this would not be a hundred ordinary strikes; this would be a hundred full-force strikes! That could well cost Ning nearly half of his life force... and if his opponent was more difficult to deal with than anticipated, Ning could actually die from this fight.

"W-what..." as the Blazesun Ruler's body was chopped through, his body transformed into fire and furiously strove to defend. He was at the Hegemonic level of insight, after all; his body was incredibly tough and he possessed a formidable invulnerable form which made it so that even the Sithe Exalt he fought had been unable to injure him.

“He managed to injure me heavily with just one strike!” The Blazesun Ruler’s face was completely ashen. If a single strike could wipe out 5% of his truesoul... this was terrifying. This was his truesoul!

Not even the supremely exalted Autarchs would be able to kill him with just one or two strikes. It would take the Autarchs a somewhat extended battle in order to kill him. It was likely that they weren’t much more powerful than this Daolord Darknorth.

In truth, his guess was spot-on. In terms of profundity, the Eternal Omega Sword Dao was on par with the Daobirths of the Autarchs; the only difference was that the Eternal Omega Sword Dao wasn’t quite as ‘broad’. However, Ning was currently wielding what could be described as the number-one offensive treasure of the entire Chaosverse, the Northbow swords. This meant that his full-force attack was indeed on par with an Autarch’s attack.

“Flee. Flee!” All other thoughts fled from the Blazesun Ruler’s mind as he immediately turned tail and fled. What he wanted was a fun and exciting battle, not to be massacred and killed!

Whoosh! The Blazesun Ruler quickly fled into his black warship, then immediately sent it tearing through the membrane surrounding Wellspring Sea and fleeing far away. Ning didn’t move to stop him, just watching as he fled.

“Master, are you really going to let him run away like that?” The Flamewing God finally regained his usual aura of bravado. “You should’ve just killed him and taken his warship away. That thing looks better than our realmship.”

“Let’s leave as well,” Ning said.

“Leave?” Nuwa, Su Youji, and the others all flew over. Su Youji asked in confusion, “Why do we have to leave?”

“If I really wanted to kill him, it’d probably cost me half of my own life,” Ning said. “Let’s hurry up and leave. I scared him off with that attack, but he’ll quickly realize that I won’t be able to kill him that easily. He might even go and invite four or five of the other Domain Rulers to come with

him. If that happens, we'll be in trouble."

Su Youji and Flamewing had been feeling excited, but now they came back to their senses. They remembered that their master was a Daolord who had failed the Daomerge; each strike he used was consuming his own life force.

"Let's go." Ning immediately led them into the realmship and hurriedly left the Wellspring Sea.

Credits

Translator: [Iewatermelons](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)